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INCEPTION REPORT – AFGHAN BIODIVERSITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

PROSPERITY, LIVELIHOODS AND CONSERVING
ECOSYSTEMS (PLACE) IQC TASK ORDER #2

November 2007

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AUTHORITY

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PREPARED BY:**AFGHAN BIODIVERSITY
SUPPORT PROGRAM (ABSP)****CREDITS:**

The preliminary work plan described in this document is based on the ECODIT Technical Proposal, as revised, submitted 17th October 2007 and incorporated into the Task Order award.

AFGHAN BIODIVERSITY SUPPORT PROGRAM IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

ECODIT, Inc.
1800 N. Kent Street, Suite 1260
Arlington, VA 22209
USA

Tel: +1-703-841-1883
Fax: +1-703-841-1885
Web: www.ecodit.com

#1059 First Street
behind Ghazi school
Karta-i Chahar
Kabul, Afghanistan

Tel: +93 (0)7-07-236-313
Tel: +93 (0)7-00-211-546
email: tjohnson@ecodit.com

With:



Development & Training Services, Inc. (dTS)
1100 N. Glebe Road, Suite 1070
Arlington, VA 22201
USA

Tel: +1-703-465-9388
Fax: +1-703-465-9344
Web: www.onlineDTS.com

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DISCLAIMER

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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ACRONYMS

Abbreviations and acronyms have been kept to a minimum in the text of this document. Where abbreviations or acronyms have been used, they are accompanied by their full expression the first time they appear, unless they are commonly used and generally understood abbreviations such as NGO, kg, etc. However, in order to facilitate understanding of the acronyms used, a complete list is included here.

ABSP	Afghan Biodiversity Support Program
ACC	Afghan Conservation Corps
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADS	Automated Directives System (USAID)
AED	Academy for Educational Development
AIDAR	Agency for International Development Acquisition Regulations (USAID)
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
BS/BA	Bachelor of Science / Bachelor of Arts (tertiary education degrees)
CBO(s)	Community-Based Organization(s)
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resources Management
CBRM	Community-Based Resources Management
CEC	Committee for Environmental Coordination (Government of Afghanistan)
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CTO	Cognizant Technical Officer (USAID)
dTS	Development & Training Services, Inc.
EA	Environmental Assessment
EGAT	Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade (USAID)
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulations (U.S. Government)
FF&E	Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment
GAIN	Green Afghanistan Initiative (World Food Programme)
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GPfA	Global Partnership for Afghanistan
HQ	Headquarters (central government agencies)
ICIMOD	International Center for Integrated Mountain Development
IDP(s)	Internally displaced person(s)
IEPP	Integrated Environmental Protection Project (World Food Programme)
IRoA	Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
IUCN	World Conservation Union
LT TA	Long-term Technical Assistance

M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (Government of Afghanistan)
MIWRE	Ministry of Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment (Government of Afghanistan)
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MSc	Master of Science (graduate-level degree)
NAICS	North American Industry Classification System
NCEP	National Coordination of Environmental Programs (proposed Committee)
NEPA	National Environmental Protection Agency (Government of Afghanistan)
NGO(s)	Nongovernmental Organization(s)
NR/B	Natural Resources & Biodiversity
NRM	Natural Resource Management
PA(s)	Protected Area(s)
PASA	Participating Agency Service Agreement (US Government)
PLACE	Prosperity, Livelihoods and Conserving Ecosystems (Indefinite Quantity Contract)
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
RCO	Regional Contracting Officer (USAID)
RFA	Request for Applications
RFQ	Request for Quotations
RFTOP	Request for Task Order Proposals
SDB	Small disadvantaged business
SEA	Save the Environment – Afghanistan
STTA	Short-term Technical Assistance
TBD	To be determined (staff not yet identified)
TL-SEA	Team Leader – Senior Environmental Advisor
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
US EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
USG	United States Government
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WFP	World Food Programme

PREFACE

ECODIT was contracted by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) / Afghanistan to implement the Afghan Biodiversity Support Program under a Task Order to the Prosperity, Livelihoods and Conserving Ecosystems (PLACE) Indefinite Quantity Contract #EPP-I-02-06-00010-00. USAID and ECODIT signed the task order on November 5, 2007 with an effective date of 01 November 2007 and completion date of 30 June 2010.

The task order engages ECODIT and its implementing partner¹ to assist USAID/Afghanistan in achieving progress toward the Natural Resources and Biodiversity program element of Program Area 8: Environment, under the Economic Growth objective in the global Foreign Assistance Framework of the United States Government.

The purpose of the Afghan Biodiversity Support Program is to provide technical assistance services directly supporting the Government of Afghanistan National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) in institutional strengthening, public and technician training, environmental management demonstration grants, and development of policies and regulations. The work objective is to assist in implementation of environmental policy and laws of Afghanistan relating to renewable natural resources. In coordination and collaboration with NEPA and other agencies and organizations supporting NEPA, the ABSP field team will provide on-the-job technical assistance, organize workshops and deliver training courses to produce sustainable environmental improvements, especially in biodiversity conservation and the green environment, while improving the long-term capabilities and skills within NEPA and NGOs to:

1. Fulfill the environmental assessment mandate of NEPA;
2. Coordinate environmental programs to meet the Environment Law objectives;
3. Conduct effective public education and outreach;
4. Develop and implement environmental regulations; and
5. Support community-based resource management through NGO grants.

ECODIT is required under the task order to submit an inception report to USAID/Afghanistan within 30 days after award of the task order. The inception report “shall outline a preliminary work plan for the life of the task order” ... and ... “shall include the schedule for procurement of goods and services, a cash flow plan, data collection, analysis and other activities.” The inception report “shall also include expected results, outputs and indicators that will be the bases for measuring the progress towards the attainment of the task order objectives.” This document is the Inception Report for the Afghan Biodiversity Support Program.

The Inception Report consists of three chapters. The first is an overview of ABSP technical activities, including a very brief review of the approved strategy for achieving the objectives listed above. The 2nd chapter briefly describes the administrative plans for ABSP, including procurement and cash flow projections. The 3rd chapter provides a preliminary work plan to be undertaken by the field team throughout the life of the task order, highlighting expected results, outputs and indicators for each Task specified in the task order.

A set of Annexes provide the following in tabular form: A) the overall life-of-project preliminary work plan and performance indicators; B) an illustrative timetable for preliminary work plan activities; and C) preliminary cash flow projections. The 2008 Annual Work Plan will provide more detail on field activities as well as the life-of-project M&E Plan.

Todd R. Johnson
Sr. Environmental Advisor and
Team Leader of Afghan BSP
ECODIT, Inc.

November 2007

¹ The task order contains approval to subcontract Development & Training Services, Inc. (dTS)

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1. AFGHAN BIODIVERSITY SUPPORT PROGRAM – OVERVIEW

This document is the Inception Report for the Afghan Biodiversity Support Program activity of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Afghanistan country mission. The Inception Report provides a preliminary Work Plan for the task order performance period.

This chapter briefly presents an overview of the activity, including the key objectives to be achieved and challenges expected to be experienced by ABSP throughout the implementation period. It is intended to be brief, with detail on individual activities to be provided in the 2008 Annual Work Plan to follow this document within 30 calendar days after USAID approval of this Inception Report.

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND²

As a rebuilding country, Afghanistan faces the overwhelming task of rebuilding its infrastructure, economic, social, and political systems in the aftermath of destructive wars and amid lingering violence. Entire communities have been displaced by war, and large segments of the population have urgent needs for shelter, food, clothing, clean water and sanitation, and security. Meeting these pressing needs is leading to rapid and severe environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity.

Natural resource conservation is therefore a critical component of reconstruction and development in Afghanistan. According to the *National Report of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on the Implementation of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification* (Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, July 2006), 80 percent of the population directly relies upon the nation's natural resources to meet their daily needs. Long-term stability will be directly dependent on sustainable management of natural resources and despite the isolation of rural communities in Afghanistan, issues here are not just a matter of local concern. Afghanistan plays a critical role on the global political stage, especially its borders with Pakistan, Iran, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and China. In a volatile region, cultural dissolution can have regional and even global repercussions. If environmental conditions continue to degrade, people will no longer be able to carve a living out of the fragile steppe, desert, and mountains as they have for centuries. Poverty will spread, communities and cultural practices will dissolve, and rural migration will further dissolve cultural connections and negatively affect neighboring communities and regions.

Unfortunately, Afghanistan's resource base has been dramatically and negatively affected over the course of the last quarter century from near-constant conflict and associated pressures related to the destruction of infrastructure, movements of large numbers of internally displaced people, an influx of modern weaponry, extreme poverty, and an almost total lack of enforcement. Coupled with severe drought, the results have been that rangelands have deteriorated, forests have been felled, and wildlife has been hunted indiscriminately. Unchecked forest cutting, increased agricultural production, overgrazing and illegal trade in endangered wildlife species have severely degraded Afghanistan's natural resources – forests, soil, water, and biodiversity. Deforestation, in large part due to the government's limited capacity to manage and protect forested areas, but also due to the need for land and forest products to satisfy the needs of an impoverished population, is taking place at an alarming rate.

In order to slow these degrading effects, and eventually reverse them, approaches to natural resource management must emphasize efforts to meet basic needs and increase economic activity while promoting sustainable natural resource use. These approaches must also include a highly visible public outreach campaign in order to restore public opinion of the government's commitment to its constituents. An environmental function to lead these efforts, however, did not previously exist in an organized manner in Afghanistan's central government structure. In 2002, a new Environment Function was created in the Ministry of Irrigation, Water Resources and Environment (MIWRE) as the Department of Environment.

² Some of the material in this section is adapted from USAID RFTOP 306-07-025, issued 17 July 2007.

In January 2005, the Department of Environment was separated from the MIWRE and declared an independent department that in May 2005 was granted independent status as the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA). The restructuring and institutional development of NEPA involves the priorities outlined in the National Development Framework. In relation to environment, the National Development Budget for 1382-1384 states the following:³

“The establishment of a national environmental framework and an operational agency will require developing a national environmental framework, which will include policy, legislative and regulatory aspects, establishing agreed environmental standards, and environmental impact assessment procedures and establishing an environmental agency, with staff and capacity to raise environmental awareness, implement environmental policy and regulations.”

The National Development Budget for 1382/3 identified strengthening the environmental management capacity of NEPA as one of the highest priorities for public investment in this sector. To assist with this process, the international community through the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is providing ongoing support through activities that will over time strengthen the environmental management function within the Government of Afghanistan.

ABSP is the USAID contribution to supporting NEPA, specifically to develop the capacity to oversee and implement sustainable management of the country’s natural resources. In collaboration with UNEP, ADB, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), and other agencies and organizations supporting the institutional strengthening of NEPA, the ECODIT ABSP team will provide technical assistance toward NEPA developing the capability to:

1. Effectively enforce environmental laws through formulating relevant regulations;
2. Harmonize environment-related activities funded by different organizations and the government, with NEPA as the national coordinator of environment programs;
3. Develop and implement public education and outreach programs on the environment; and
4. Encourage community based resource management through a small grant program that also strengthens the capability of NEPA to develop and manage environment programs.

The overall expected outcome of these efforts will be a more competent and credible NEPA with a foundation of human, financial, and technical resources that can lead to long-term effectiveness of the agency in fulfilling its mandate.

1.2 USAID/AFGHANISTAN CONTEXT ⁴

USAID/Afghanistan is providing assistance to the government and people of Afghanistan in the reconstruction of their country following more than twenty years of war. USAID efforts include improved infrastructure, rehabilitation of government services, assistance to the private sector, and development of significant economic activities in agriculture and business. Because of the importance of Afghanistan in relation to US national and global security, and because of Afghanistan’s dependence on its deteriorating natural resource base for recovery and stability, USAID has made environmental conservation a major theme to its efforts in Afghanistan.

As part of these activities, the natural resources including significant biodiversity wealth must be properly managed and conserved. The GoA is starting to institutionalize environmental management for the country. To support this effort, USAID has embarked on a program to support natural resource management in Afghanistan. The USAID program is addressing the problems through several activities to include watershed/range management; community management of selected important habitats, assisting the GoA in becoming integrated into the regional cross-border management of natural resources of the Himalayan region; farm forestry; and, through the work of this Task Order, support for the proper

³ Stated in relation to sub-programme 5 (environment preservation and regeneration).

⁴ Significant portions of the material in this section have been adapted slightly from text in the USAID RFTOP 306-07-025, issued 17 July 2007.

implementation of the environmental policy and laws of Afghanistan relating to the renewable natural resources.

USAID/Afghanistan recognized that in order to achieve the development goals to support biodiversity conservation and management, it needs to help Afghanistan deal with:

- Transforming a rapidly growing illicit economy based on poppy cultivation into a diverse and formal economy, led by the private sector, that raises incomes of most people, creates opportunity, and reduces poverty;
- Strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations, such as business associations and the media, to advocate for the rights of Afghans, hold policy makers accountable, and help Afghans, especially women, to identify and grasp opportunities to enhance their social and economic well being; and
- Supporting democratic reform, through legitimizing the nascent political system as a viable alternative to the politics of violence, and promoting new practices of conflict prevention, mitigation, and resolution.

These three areas, of the five areas highlighted in the Mission's Strategic Plan, serve as the foundation for the USAID environment program. Specifically, the program addresses the need for alternative incomes, promotes and strengthens civil society organizations and community groups, and advances rule of law and conflict mitigation measures regarding natural resource use/management and the environment.

The Mission's environment and natural resources program is rooted in the Agency's guidelines for natural resource management (NRM) and bio-diversity programming in "Rebuilding Countries" which states:

"In rebuilding countries, Natural Resource and Biodiversity (NR/B) programming focuses on stabilizing the use and management of natural resources to ensure that human needs are met in sustainable ways. Programming emphasizes securing natural resources and biodiverse areas so that they do not become refugia for or objects of illicit and dangerous activity fueling conflict; mitigating negative impacts of conflict or crisis to natural resources and biodiversity; promotion of dispute mitigation and resolution tied to resource and land tenure conflicts; providing sustainable alternatives to the destruction of natural resources to meet food security, clean water and livelihood needs; strengthening, rehabilitating or rebuilding infrastructure; and rebuilding institutions and capacity to undertake NR/B programming."

To date, USAID/Afghanistan has focused primarily on rebuilding and development of livestock and horticulture sectors with limited emphasis placed on forestry and other environmental and NRM activities. Through a PASA agreement with USDA, USAID has funded small activities on forestry with the Afghan Conservation Corps (ACC) for mapping of native pistachio forests and development of commercial nurseries for agroforestry and horticulture production, as well as providing training and capacity development to Kabul University and the Department of Forestry within the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL). These activities have not provided a comprehensive environmental program and do not address the larger policy issues.

USAID/Afghanistan's overall biodiversity conservation and natural resource management program is designed to promote the environmental health of Afghanistan through a number of activities described in the next section. Together, these activities will:

- Incorporate issues related to biodiversity conservation and management into economic and development analytical work where relevant;
- Focus on "mainstreaming" biodiversity conservation and management including land reform and agricultural services, but also irrigation, water, in addition to river basin, forestry, watershed and range management using accepted techniques such as community management and introduction of local controls over the resources;
- Raise support for conservation and use of agricultural biodiversity native to Afghanistan in national and international forums;

- Strengthen protected areas and landscape management, focusing on community participation, combining conservation with sustainable use;
- Promote transboundary cooperation on ecosystems management (e.g., the Wakhan Corridor of northeast Afghanistan, bordering Tajikistan, China and Pakistan);
- Broaden involvement with other institutions and civil society organizations through more proactive engagement and action on biodiversity.
- Develop an organization within the GoA to act as both technical advisor on the environment and the principal contact point for Natural Resources program proposed by donors, NGO, and other national and international partners.

1.3 ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Afghan Biodiversity Support Program is to provide technical assistance to the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) in developing the agency's capability to oversee and implement sustainable management of the country's natural resources through sustainable improvements in the:

1. Effective enforcement of environmental laws by helping NEPA formulate relevant regulations;
2. Harmonization of environment-related activities funded by different organizations and the government, with NEPA as the national coordinator of environment programs;
3. Development and implementation of public education and outreach program; and
4. Encouragement of community based natural resource management through small grants program while developing the capability of NEPA to develop and manage environment programs.

Achievement of progress toward these objectives requires a fully-integrated team of multidisciplinary staff – comprised of Afghans and expatriates – that combines knowledge and experience in Afghanistan with global best practice in international development and institutional strengthening. The ECODIT ABSP team providing this technical assistance will support NEPA in overseeing implementation of the nation's Environment Law to increase sustainable management of natural resources.

The contract Statement of Work (section C) defines the specifications for the team in implementing the ABSP activity. In order to have implementation contribute toward the overall objective of a strengthened NEPA, the following five Tasks and Subtasks provide the contractual framework for activities.

Table 1: Tasks and Subtasks specified in the ABSP contract statement of work

TASKS	SUBTASKS
Task #1 Institutional Strengthening	
Subtask 1.1)	Conduct a rapid capacity-building needs assessment
Subtask 1.2)	Develop environmental assessment center and strengthen its capabilities
Subtask 1.3)	Assist in developing management and administrative systems and funding mechanisms
Subtask 1.4)	Assist NEPA to develop procedures and rules required to fulfill its mandate
Subtask 1.5)	Assist in establishing a "green environment" technical oversight office
Subtask 1.6)	Develop and deliver short training courses and regional study tours
Subtask 1.7)	Assist in selecting two candidates for scholarships to a Master's program in environmental assessment
Task #2 National Coordination of Environmental Programs	
Subtask 2.1)	Assist in establishing the National Coordination of Environmental Programs (NCEP) committee
Subtask 2.2)	Provide technical and financial assistance to the NCEP committee

TASKS	SUBTASKS
Task #3 Public Outreach and Education	
Subtask 3.1)	Assess communications needs
Subtask 3.2)	Establish an information resource center at NEPA
Subtask 3.3)	Support the production of publications and multi-media outreach
Subtask 3.4)	Work with NEPA to improve environmental education
Subtask 3.5)	Train NEPA and other stakeholders on environmental public education and outreach
Task #4 Environmental Regulation and Financing	
Subtask 4.1)	Regulation
Subtask 4.2)	Financing
Task #5 Community-based Resource Management	
Subtask 5.1)	Design the CBRM small grants program and establish an advisory committee
Subtask 5.2)	Prepare and issue requests for applications
Subtask 5.3)	Award grants and build NGO capacity
Subtask 5.4)	Monitor grant implementation and build NEPA capacity

Each of these tasks and subtasks has defined deliverables, which are shown in Annex A: Preliminary Work Plan and Performance Monitoring Table.

BIODIVERSITY ATTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS

All activities of the Afghan Biodiversity Support Program must be attributable to biodiversity conservation, as part of regulatory compliance by USAID to funding requirements. In order to qualify for biodiversity attribution, ABSP activities must meet all of the following four criteria:

- Have an explicit biodiversity objective rather than have biodiversity conservation result as a positive externality;
- Be identified based on an analysis of threats to biodiversity;
- Undergo monitoring against associated indicators for biodiversity conservation; and
- Site-based activities must have the intent to positively impact biodiversity in biologically significant areas.

The activities may be either “Primary Biodiversity Code” or “Secondary Biodiversity Code” attributions⁵.

Primary coding requires that an activity has “a primary objective of conserving biological diversity in natural and managed terrestrial and marine ecosystems,” must have been “identified through an analysis of threats to biodiversity” and “must have associated indicators for biodiversity conservation.”

Secondary coding has the same requirements, except that the conservation of biological diversity need not be the primary objective. Conservation of biodiversity must still, however, be an explicit objective.

The ABSP team is required to ensure that 100 percent of task order activities (and funding) meets the biodiversity attribution requirements including that approximately 30 percent of activities (and funding) affects forested ecosystems. ECODIT recognizes the challenge this creates against the backdrop of wide-ranging needs and expectations within NEPA. We will work with USAID and NEPA to both address project needs and comply with requirements tied to the funding and reporting. Indicators for measuring performance against the biodiversity and forestry requirements will be elaborated in the task order Performance Monitoring Plan to be completed as part of the initial Annual Work Plan.

⁵ *Biodiversity Conservation: A guide for USAID staff and partners*. September 2005. Pg 8.

INTEGRATING GENDER AND EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS RELEVANT TO AFGHANISTAN

Article 22 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan states that “The citizens of Afghanistan – whether man or woman – have equal rights and duties before the law.”⁶ Additionally, USAID has long placed gender and equity considerations as a critical cross-cutting issue. Finally, the integration of men and women into any development work simply makes it more effective. Therefore, ECODIT will work with NEPA to provide increased opportunities for women and disadvantaged groups to access, and benefit from, improved natural resource management and biodiversity conservation in a sustainable manner. Households in rural areas of Afghanistan, many of which are headed by women, depend on natural resources to sustain livelihoods and meet basic needs, in particular on forests as source of fuel wood and fodder.

The ECODIT ABSP team’s work with NEPA staff will seek to encourage relevant women groups, civil society partners, and community leaders to include men, women and the poor from rural areas in decision making about natural resource use, ensure that decisions reflect their input, and encourage them to use and manage natural resources in a sustainable manner for their own benefit. To have lasting effects, integrating gender and equity considerations requires creative initiatives and committed project staff. Efforts will be made to mainstream gender and equity considerations seamlessly into all stages and aspects of the ABSP task order, including but not limited to the community-based resource management program. Key aspects of the ECODIT approach are described next.

Gender and equity assessment:

The ECODIT ABSP team will review existing data on progress to date in promoting gender and equity considerations in using and managing natural resources in Afghanistan, and supplement this information with anecdotal evidence gathered from field visits and meetings with local and international NGOs active in the field. This baseline assessment will help to design ABSP activities that are tailored to fill gaps in promoting gender and equity considerations.

Gender and equity guidelines:

Following the gender and equity assessment, an ABSP gender specialist from dTS will facilitate a workshop with key NEPA staff, and the ABSP field team, on gender and equity considerations relevant to biodiversity conservation and natural resource management in Afghanistan. During this workshop, NEPA staff and the ABSP team will work together to produce a set of gender and equity goals, guidelines and indicators to which they will adhere during the ABSP and beyond.

Gender disaggregated monitoring and evaluation:

The gender and M&E specialists shall work with the ABSP team and NEPA staff to formulate specific indicators related to gender and equity as part of the ABSP performance monitoring plan. These indicators will provide the foundation for gender-disaggregated M&E of ABSP activities. Quantitative and qualitative baseline data will be derived from the initial gender and equity assessment. The ABSP staff will then ensure that these or similar indicators are included in the monitoring plans of small grants.

Local capacity to address gender and equity considerations:

The ECODIT ABSP team will encourage community-based NGOs that are committed to increasing natural resource management opportunities for women and the poor to (1) apply for, and benefit from, the CBRM program, and (2) participate actively in the design and implementation of the public education and outreach program. ABSP will integrate gender considerations into the EA and other training courses. In addition, the ABSP team will assist NEPA to develop curriculum materials for schools that reflect the important roles that women play in the sustainable use and management of biodiversity and natural resources.

⁶Quoted from http://www.servat.unibe.ch/law/icl/af00000_.html accessed on 19th November 2007 and cross-referenced with <http://arabic.cnn.com/afghanistan/ConstitutionAfghanistan.pdf> accessed on the same date.

1.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The foregoing description of tasks and subtasks to be undertaken by the ABSP team toward achieving the task order objectives may best be illustrated conceptually in a graphic (Fig. 1) that shows the inter-linkages of activities to one another.

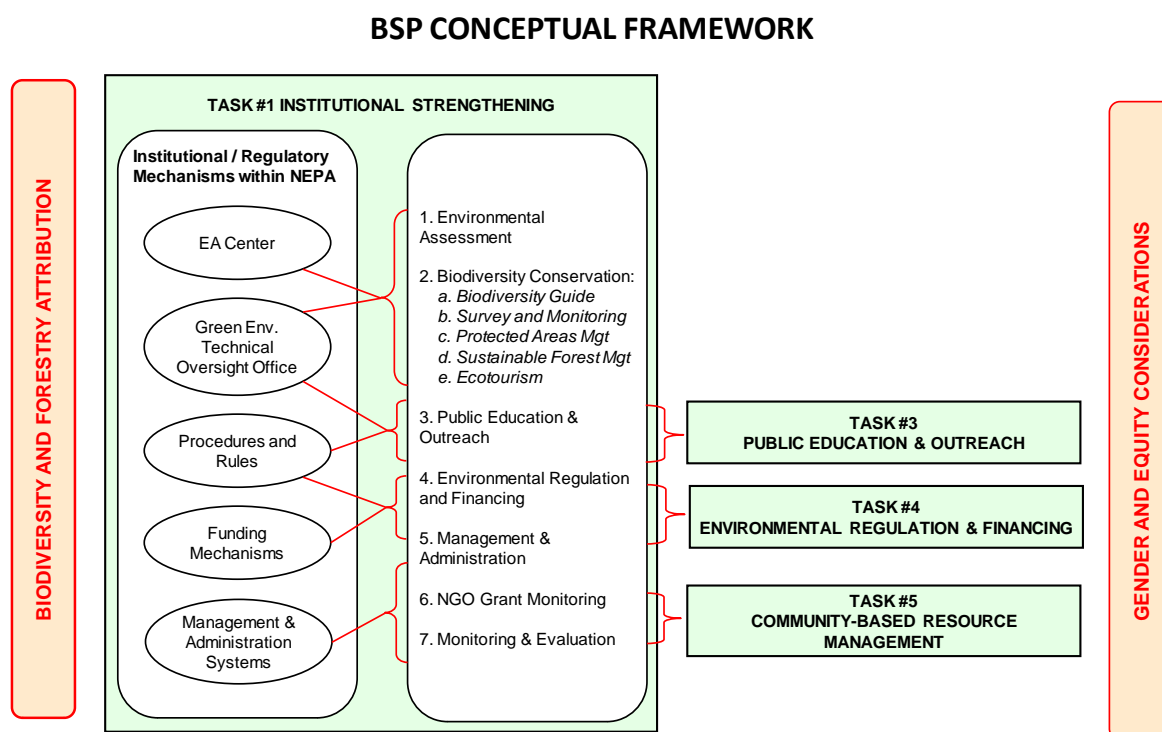


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of Afghan Biodiversity Support Program

1.5 SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES BY OTHER PARTNERS

The Afghan Biodiversity Support Program will need to collaborate and coordinate closely with a wide range of other organizations and projects already providing support to biodiversity conservation and / or the institutional strengthening of NEPA. This very brief review of existing activities by other partners is intended to demonstrate both the ECODIT team's awareness and understanding of these other efforts, and begin to clarify how the ABSP fieldwork can best complement and synergize with them.

ONGOING BIODIVERSITY ACTIVITIES OF USAID/AFGHANISTAN⁷

The activities described below highlight ongoing activities that contribute to USAID biodiversity and natural resources management activities in Afghanistan. These have been funded except where noted:

⁷ Material in this subsection is adapted slightly from text in the USAID RFTOP 306-07-025, issued 17 July 2007.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS)

CRS is working in the remote province of Ghor. There are few NGOs that are willing to work there. This activity is providing assistance in management of watershed/range areas using the Community Management Mechanism to conserve the resources of the very disadvantaged people in this remote province. This small activity will test the concept of allowing people to have both authority and use of resources important to their well being. This effort is an important effort having the Government of Afghanistan and local people collaborate on natural resources management.

International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

ICIMOD is a recognized organization in the region that has the mandate to bring about common understanding and collaboration among the States that share the habitats of the Himalayas. Afghanistan was once a very active member of the organization but has long been inactive because of the war. ICIMOD's unique role in the area and their demonstrated technical skill in community management of mountain resources will be key resource available to the Government of Afghanistan becoming an active member in the regional effort to properly manage the region's natural resources.

Global Partnership for Afghanistan (GPFA)

GPFA is an emergent organization. They work on assisting farmers to grow fast-growing trees as a farm crop. This is the only such program in Afghanistan providing assistance directly to farmers.

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)

WCS is implementing a three-year program in wildlife conservation, community conservation, capacity building, wildlife and rangeland management, promoting and developing protected areas, developing cross-border landscape management and developing an international park in the Wakhan Corridor.

World Food Programme (WFP)

The implementation of the Provincial Reforestation and Integrated Environmental Protection Project (IEPP) was recently awarded to WFP. IEPP is a component of the on-going UN Joint Program with the Government of Afghanistan - the "Green Afghanistan Initiative (GAIN)". The objectives of GAIN are:

1. to increase natural vegetation and forest cover through community and government-supported labor intensive projects;
2. to provide alternative sustainable livelihoods through home and community-based nurseries;
3. to increase environmental awareness through education by integrating environmental issues in to the school curriculum; and
4. to build community and government capacity on strategic planning and policy development.

IEPP will enhance the capacity of the government agencies and communities in the provinces of Faryab, Sari-i-Pul and Jawzjan to manage their natural resources and conserve biodiversity.

ONGOING NEPA INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING ACTIVITIES OF OTHER PARTNERS

Since it was first established in 2005, several other international development partners have been closely working with NEPA and contributing to its institutional strengthening. Some of the most relevant and directly linked to ABSP objectives are the following:

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

In October 2003, the UNEP began the Capacity and Institution Development Programme for NEPA. The program continues until 2009 with financial support of the European Commission, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the Government of Finland.

The focus of UNEP's work with NEPA has been:

1. **Environmental coordination** – supported NEPA with the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) poverty reduction strategy paper;
2. **Environmental Legislation** – supported the development and passage of the Environment Law, as well as policies and regulations such as the Environmental Impact Assessment Policy;
3. **Community-based Natural Resource Management** – this program was implemented as a pilot project with great success and recommendations for future efforts in this area;
4. The priority **reform and restructuring** program 2004;
5. **Environmental Information and Monitoring** – the development of an environmental database framework;
6. **Environmental Education and awareness**;
7. **Multilateral Environmental Agreements** – supported NEPA's efforts to accede to several MEAs and to secure funding for implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
8. UNEP hosted the Afghanistan-Iran dialogue on the **Sistan basin wetlands**.

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

Since 2003 the ADB has been working with the Environmental Authority, now represented by NEPA, by providing environmental management and capacity building support. They successfully implemented the Kabul Air Quality Management Program which lasted from December 2004 until December 2006. The program worked with NEPA on emission inventory and control as well as capacity building. There is potential for more funding to come through that will allow an extension of this program. ADB also has worked with NEPA on developing renewable energy programs. Natural Resource Management and Biodiversity Conservation in Afghanistan was another project which was jointly implemented with NEPA and the Ministry of Agriculture. The various components of that project were:

1. Protected areas management and biodiversity conservation;
2. Poverty alleviation in buffer zones of protected areas;
3. Capacity building in biodiversity and park management;
4. Park infrastructures;
5. Technical and administrative support for the Department of Natural Resources;
6. Study Tours to a National Park in Nepal; and
7. Ecotourism development.

Afghan Conservation Corps (ACC)

The ACC was established in 2003 with the help of USDA and financial support from the US Department of State. UNOPS plays a key role in providing operational and management support for the ACC on the ground. The objective of the program is to provide community-based employment for Afghans in the following areas:

1. Growing and planting trees
2. Fostering conservation of water
3. Controlling soil erosion

The targeted populations for these employment opportunities have been returning refugees, internally displaced persons (IDP) and vulnerable groups such as women. The ACC have begun such initiatives as the Greenbelt program, which aims to plant 850,000 seedlings around Afghanistan in the hope of returning the country to its former green state of over 30 years ago. A large part of the reforestation

effort has focused on bringing back the pistachio woodlands of Afghanistan. The ACC has also carried out a small grants program in which it worked directly with the local Shuras on implementing community projects to support the overall goal of the program.

World Bank

The World Bank has not done any direct projects with NEPA, but has provided support to their development in several ways as well as actively looking into how they can support NEPA more directly in the future. The one significant action they have taken to support and validate NEPA's role in the government is to require that any Ministry carrying out a World Bank-funded project first seek approval by NEPA regarding the required Environmental Impact Assessments. They recognize NEPA's weakness in being able to enforce such newly established regulations, therefore aim to build awareness among the Ministries for such regulations.

The World Bank also has been involved in trainings to support awareness building among NEPA staff, as well as the other Ministries. A World Bank consultant will begin work soon to look further into the needs of NEPA, so that they can develop projects that will support the environmental management capabilities of NEPA and strengthen its institution.

2. MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN FOR ABSP

This chapter of the Inception Report provides a brief description of the administrative plans for ABSP, including procurement and cash flow projections. It incorporates and consolidates information from the following sources:

1. The ECODIT technical proposal submitted in response to the PLACE IQC RFTOP 306-07-025, as revised (final version submitted 17th October 2007);
2. Relevant sections of the task order, including:
 - a. Section C – Description/Specifications/Statement of Work,
 - b. Section D – Packaging and Marking,
 - c. Section F – Deliveries or Performance,
 - d. Section G – Task Order Administration Data,
 - e. Section H – Special Task Order Requirements, and
 - f. Section I – Contract Clauses
3. The results of a series of orientation meetings held at ECODIT home office immediately upon official award of the task order. These meetings included both internal discussions among ABSP long-term technical advisors and senior management of ECODIT, and external discussions with USAID/EGAT/NRM team members, US EPA collaborators with USAID/Afghanistan, and USDA personnel involved in implementing support to the Government of Afghanistan through a PASA agreement with USAID/Afghanistan.

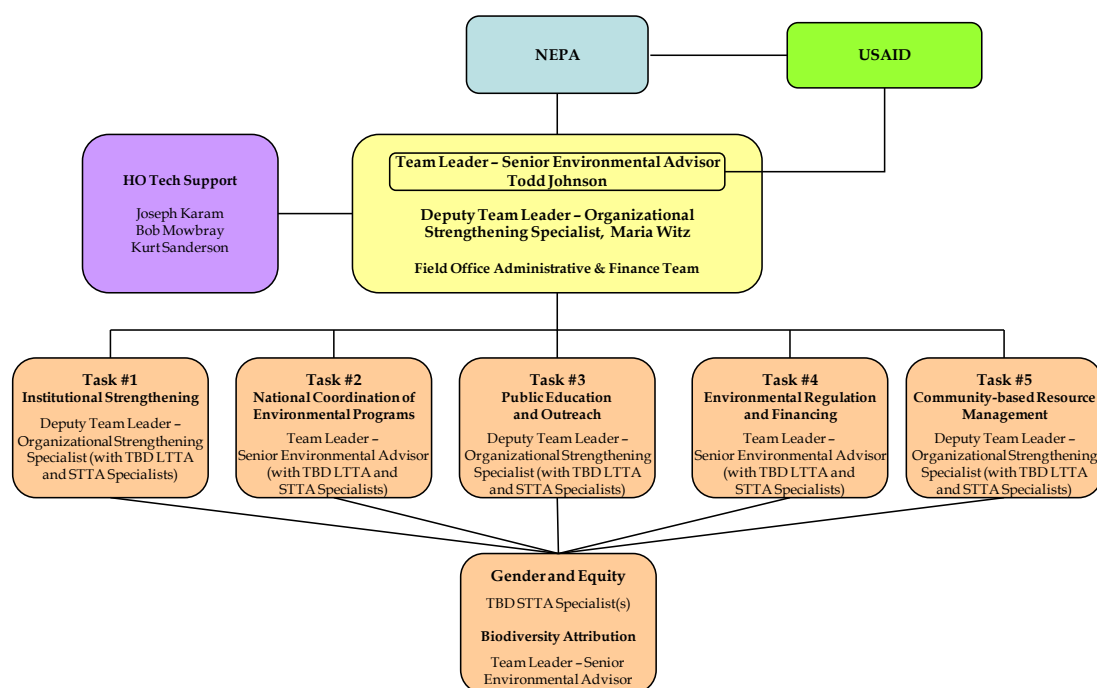
This chapter of the Inception Report is divided into sections covering managerial matters, administrative matters, and financial matters. The last of these relates to the cash flow plan required under clause F.7(a) of the task order.

2.1 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE, STAFFING, AND REPORTING

ECODIT will provide overall project management and administration through the Team Leader--Senior Environmental Advisor (Kabul-based) with home office supervision and support through the HO Program Supervisor and Program Administration & Backstopping Specialist (Arlington, VA). This will involve coordination and transparent collaboration among ABSP team members, NEPA personnel and leadership, other relevant agencies of the Government of Afghanistan (e.g., Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock), USAID/Afghanistan CTO and other officials, subcontractors, other partners supporting NEPA, other relevant USAID/Afghanistan activities, and other donor projects.

The ABSP team will apply an integrated management approach that provides for clear lines of communication and responsibility (Fig. 2). The Team Leader and Senior Environmental Advisor holds responsibility for managing all technical, financial and contractual aspects of the task order and will liaise with the relevant personnel of USAID on these matters. The Team Leader and Senior Environmental Advisor reports to the home-office-based Program Supervisor who bears ultimate responsibility for overall ECODIT performance of the task order.

Recognizing the unique dynamics of working in Afghanistan, ECODIT will utilize adaptive management measures to ensure smooth execution of program activities. The ABSP team will work with NEPA to instill a sense of potential and ability to meet institutional goals and objectives by keeping pace with changing conditions. Management style will allow local long-term staff to take initiative and learn lessons on their own. This transition will be demonstrated by participatory communication that will lead to the eventual development of work plans, as well as cooperation and collaboration with other agency staff.



Staff Organizational Chart

Figure 2: Afghan Biodiversity Support Program management structure

ABSP STAFFING

The ECODIT-led implementation team for ABSP consists of the long-term, full-time employees detailed below, the home-office technical and administrative supervisory and backstopping personnel, and a series of short-term technical advisors each selected to perform a specific contribution to overall achievement of project objectives. The full-time, long-term team in Kabul consists of:

1. **Team Leader & Sr. Environmental Advisor** – holding managerial responsibilities described above as well as principal mentor and advisor to senior leadership of NEPA, division heads, and the members of the ABSP team who are expected to join NEPA following the project;
2. **Deputy Team Leader & Organizational Strengthening Specialist** – holding primary responsibility for the overall coordination and implementation of capacity building activities both within NEPA and with nongovernmental organizations involved in the CBRM small grants program element;
3. **Five Afghan long-term technical professionals** – to be determined following consultations with NEPA, USAID, and other partners. Possible positions may include some of the following: (a) a public awareness / communications and media specialist, (b) a resource economist / environmental finance specialist, (c) an environmental science / biodiversity specialist, (d) an environmental policy / regulatory specialist, (e) a geographic information systems specialist, (f) a training / capacity building specialist, and/or (g) an environmental monitoring specialist;
4. **Five Afghan administrative staff** – consisting of the following positions:
 - a. *Operations Manager* – holding primary responsibility for administrative operations of the ECODIT ABSP offices and field activities, including security liaison, computer network administration, negotiation and implementation of administrative contracts and leases, recordkeeping of personnel files and performance evaluations, and supervision of the other administrative team members (except Finance Manager / Grants Administrator);

- b. *Finance Manager / Grants Administrator* – holding primary responsibility for financial matters of the ECODIT ABSP office and field operations, including processing and payment of all approved project expenditures, maintaining USAID-compliant audit trails of all transactions, preparation and submission of all monthly, quarterly and annual financial reports required, maintaining in-country banking relationships and records, ensuring ECODIT compliance with all applicable tax laws and record keeping, and review of ECODIT invoices prior to submission to USAID for payment;
- c. *Monitoring & Evaluation Officer* – originally proposed as Procurement / Logistics Coordinator, the ECODIT ABSP field team now believes that a dedicated M&E Officer may be a more productive use of limited US Government resources for long-term personnel. The holder of this proposed substitute position would hold primary responsibility for maintaining an accurate and timely set of data relevant to all Performance Monitoring Plan and biodiversity earmark indicators, generating timely reports for a variety of audiences related to activities of the ABSP field team, and supporting the Operations Manager to ensure ECODIT ABSP compliance with Geo-Base reporting requirements of USAID/Afghanistan;
- d. *Translator/Interpreter* – holding primary responsibility for ensuring the accurate and timely translation of all project documents that need to be distributed in Dari or Pashto, providing accurate and timely translation of relevant documents from Dari or Pashto into English, and providing interpretation services for ABSP long- or short-term personnel as needed;
- e. *Staff Assistant/Receptionist* – holding primary responsibility for facilitating communication and courier services between and among ABSP office and partners or sponsors by telephone or other means, greeting and hosting visitors to the ABSP office, maintaining a petty cash account and providing timely and accurate reconciliations, supporting staff in making bookings for in-country travel, and supporting the Organizational Strengthening Specialist and other technical staff as needed in organizing and conducting workshops or training events.

In addition to these staff, ECODIT will engage the services of up to three office support personnel, one of whom will also assist the resident Team Leader with housekeeping duties, and three drivers selected based on experience and previous defensive driving training.

ABSP REPORTING / CONTRACT DELIVERABLES

This section provides a summary of the reporting requirements for ABSP, as specified in Section F.7 – Deliverable Reports and Work Plans of the task order award to ECODIT. The following list indicates the type of report and its due date. Not included are the technical deliverables that will be detailed in the 3rd chapter of this Inception Report (Preliminary Work Plan) or identified as part of detailed annual work planning processes.

1. *Inception Report* – this document; due 30 calendar days from task order award (30 Nov 07). USAID must provide comments and approval or disapproval within 14 calendar days of receipt.
2. *Annual Work Plan* – initial, to include the M&E plan, due within 30 calendar days after USAID approval of the Inception Report. Thereafter, each annual work plan is due no later than 60 calendar days before the commencement of each task order planning period.
3. *Quarterly Reports* – due within seven calendar days after the quarter being reported, to include update on progress of the work and comparison of actual accomplishments with indicators as specified in work plans. Also covers explanation of any shortfalls in accomplishment of goals, explanation of how each activity meets the USAID Biodiversity Codes requirements, summary of expenditures for the quarter and actual versus planned expenditures from inception to reported quarter, level of effort expended through the reported quarter by labor category, and status of each indicator in the M&E plan at close of the reported quarter.
4. *Annual Reports* – to be included with 4th quarterly report of each work plan year, summarizing the year's activities without repeating information from each quarterly report.

As required by Section F.7 of the task order and AIDAR 752.209-71, all reports and deliverables shall be in the English language, utilize the metric system of measurement, and (FAR 52.204-4) be printed and copied on double-sided recycled paper with 30 percent post-consumer content.

2.2 ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL PLAN

This section describes the administrative, security, and operational aspects of implementing the task order. Some of the material below is adapted from Section I – Contract Clauses of the task order and / or Section I of the Prosperity, Livelihoods and Conserving Ecosystems (PLACE) Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC) under which the task order was issued.

TASK ORDER ADMINISTRATION AND REPORTING

Administration of this task order by ECODIT will be conducted in accordance with Sections G – Task Order Administration Data, H – Special Task Order Requirements, and I – Contract Clauses of the task order as well as those sections of the IQC.

In addition to the Deliverables described above and within the Preliminary Work Plan below, several clauses in the task order and/or the PLACE IQC require ECODIT to submit reports on various aspects of implementation. These reports are the following:

1. *Foreign Taxes (PLACE IQC H.18)* – due by April 16 of each year and to include the following items in addition to report identifying information:
 - a. Amount of foreign taxes assessed by the Government of Afghanistan on commodity purchase transactions valued at \$500 or more financed with U.S. foreign assistance funds under this agreement during the prior U.S. fiscal year.
 - b. Any reimbursements received by ECODIT during the report period regardless of when the foreign tax was assessed plus any reimbursements on taxes paid within a fiscal year being reported and received by ECODIT through March 31 of the next report period.
2. *Government Property (Task Order I.2)* – due at the end of each project year and to include the value of all non-expendable property in ECODIT custody that is owned by the US Government⁸.
3. *Small Disadvantaged Business Participation (PLACE IQC I.2)* – due at contract completion and to include the NAICS industry subsector of any small disadvantaged business, the dollar value of each qualifying SDB's participation, and the percentage of total contract value represented.

SECURITY PLAN AND PROCEDURES

ECODIT has prepared a Request for Quotations (RFQ) that will be released upon review of the selection process by the USAID/Afghanistan Office of Acquisitions and Assistance. Offerors will then have ten working days to prepare sealed bids, which will be submitted to ECODIT for review. Within three working days of the closing date for submitting bids, a review panel will convene. The panel will be made up of at least four people from the ECODIT Afghan Biodiversity Support Program team.

The RFQ requires bidders to provide a detailed description of the security services that they would offer to ECODIT, including separate details for five types of services required:

1. Security planning;
2. Technical assistance and training of ECODIT staff, including periodic update;
3. Personnel and property security to be provided at ECODIT premises;
4. Personnel security detail to be provided within Kabul; and
5. Personnel security detail to be provided during travel to selected provinces.

⁸ The clause on Government Property (AIDAR 752.242-70) refers only to property owned by the US Government, which may include vehicles. The task order specifies in H.8 that "Title to nonexpendable property acquired with Task Order funds shall vest in the cooperating country in accordance with AIDAR 752.245-71, Title to and Care of Property, unless the Contracting Officer approves otherwise."

If suitable responses to the RFQ are received, one award will be made within five working days of the review panel meeting, provided that the selected contractor furnishes ECODIT with all the required documentation itemized in the RFQ.

The responses will be evaluated in accordance with the Evaluation Criteria below. Award will be made to the responsible offeror whose RFQ response offers *the best value*. Selection of “best value” for contract award will be made based on the ranking of submissions by the panel according to the evaluation criteria:

Past Performance and Capability

The applicant’s past experience and capabilities in providing private security services of a similar nature and demonstrated ability to minimize use of firearms in incident response unless warranted.

Technical Suitability of the Proposed Security Services

This includes features of the offeror’s proposed service provision, as follows:

- Demonstrated clear **selection criteria** for armed guards and supervision of their performance;
- Degree of **responsiveness** to the low-key strategy desired by ECODIT that still maintains adequate security of personnel and property;
- Degree of **reasonableness** in proposed use of expatriate personnel for management, supervision, technical assistance and/or training tasks;
- Degree of **professionalism** demonstrated through past performance references and verified reports on use of deadly force during incident response; and
- Degree of **competence** of personnel proposed, as well as the degree of clarity shown in defining roles for each individual proposed.

Financial and Management Capability

This includes elements of the offeror’s cost proposal section on management capability, as follows:

- Demonstrated **financial stability and viability** as evidenced through financial statements;
- Degree of **compliance** with applicable labor, tax and other relevant laws governing private security service provision in Afghanistan;
- Degree of **integrity and business ethics** demonstrated through past performance references;
- Degree of **professionalism** demonstrated through verified reports on use of deadly force during incident response as well as overall company management; and
- Degree of **completeness** of certifications and representations required to obtain a contract for private security provision to ECODIT or any other USAID contractor in Afghanistan.

Geographical Coverage

The extent of the offeror’s geographical coverage in or near provinces likely to be included among areas of field travel by ECODIT personnel.

Cost Effectiveness

The offeror’s ability to provide competent private security services at competitive rates and to minimize overall costs of the security contract.

2.3 FINANCIAL AND CASH FLOW PLAN

This section briefly describes the financial management procedures and presents a preliminary cash flow plan for the task order. The section closes with a brief description of procedures to be followed in implementation of the small grants program called for under Task #5 – Community-based Resource Management. The programmatic aspects of this and other tasks are covered in the following chapter.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PLAN AND PROCEDURES

The ECODIT team will comply in all financial transactions with the applicable contract clauses, FAR and AIDAR regulations, and ADS 302 – Direct Contracting. The ABSP Team Leader is fully conversant with these regulations, including recent updates and changes to or issuance of AAPDs or other revisions to the applicable clauses. Also, the ECODIT home office and field team regularly review these regulations to remain current on US Government guidance regarding financial transactions, costs, audits, and other aspects of contract administration as they relate to this task order.

ECODIT will provide – as required under clause F.7(b) of the task order – a quarterly financial report incorporated into the Quarterly Performance Report. In addition, the ABSP Team Leader will submit to the USAID/Afghanistan CTO on or about the 15th of the last month of each quarter a quarterly accruals report showing actual expenditures for the first two months of the quarter and a projection of accrued expenses for the 3rd month of the quarter. These reports will follow a format specified by the Mission.

PROCUREMENT PLAN AND PRELIMINARY LOE UTILIZATION

Essentially all of the procurement will be completed within the first quarter of implementation. The only exceptions will be the items to be procured for NEPA and/or the NCEP Committee (cf. Tasks 1 and 2).

The ABSP is a CPFF / LOE task order, therefore requiring delivery of Level of Effort in addition to the deliverables discussed in the next chapter. The following table shows the preliminary projections of LOE utilization (in person-days) during the performance period of the task order. Actual usage may differ and will be reported regularly as detailed above. Readers should note that these projections are subject to the approval of work plans. Annex C provides a preliminary projection of cash flow.

Table 2: Projected ABSP level of effort (LOE) utilization - person-days per quarter per labor category

Labor Category	Q1 2008	Q2 2008	Q3 2008	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	Q2 2009	Q3 2009	Q4 2009	Q1 2010	Q2 2010	Q3 2010	Total
Expat LTTA	110	110	110	110	110	110	110	110	110	110	74	1174
Afghan LTTA	290	550	550	550	550	550	550	550	550	550	370	5610
HO Support	32	16	17	16	14	13	14	13	12	12	27	186
Expat STTA	0	58	72	48	48	48	58	24	0	24	0	380
Afghan STTA	0	0	50	50	0	50	50	0	50	50	0	300
TOTAL	432	734	799	774	722	771	782	697	722	746	471	7650

[N.B. The task order specifies 536 labor days of expat STTA(cf. F.2), yet the approved budget only provides for 380 days; for this inception report, only those days for which USAID has provided funds have been allocated in the table above]

SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

The ABSP task order describes as Task #5 the design and implementation of a small grants program to be used for encouraging investments in community-based resource management. The task order does not, however, provide ECODIT the authority to award Grants Under Contracts. Upon receipt of such authority by the Contracting Officer, ECODIT will apply the cost principles and financial management requirements contained in ADS 303 – Grants and Cooperative Agreements to the administration of all small grants awarded under the task order as sub-awards. The applicable contract clauses of the PLACE IQC will also be adhered to, including those that require specific text to flow down to sub-awards.

3. PRELIMINARY TASK ORDER WORK PLAN

This chapter of the Inception Report provides preliminary detail on implementation of the task order. It covers the full performance period, and so is necessarily general in nature. ECODIT plans to conduct a project launching workshop in January 2008, during which ABSP team members and partners will elaborate further on the strategies to be taken, specifically those actions to be undertaken during the first program year.

Subject to consultations with the USAID/Afghanistan CTO, the program year coverage of Annual Work Plans will commence 01 November and conclude 31 October of each year of the activity. Listed below in table format – with the caveat that detailed discussions have not yet been held with NEPA or other key stakeholders in ABSP – are key actions, person(s) responsible, expected timelines, and likely resource requirements necessary during implementation. Much of the material in this chapter is adapted from Section C of the task order.

3.1 TASK #1: INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

One could argue that this task is the core of the entire Afghan Biodiversity Support Program. The fundamental goal of ABSP is to support the acquisition by NEPA of the human, technical, and financial capabilities to explain the Environment Law requirements to diverse constituencies and enforce compliance, with particular emphasis on the biodiversity conservation aspects of that mandate. The goal of these efforts will be that NEPA is more capable of fulfilling its mandate in the Law.

Seven activities are identified to contribute toward the institutional strengthening of NEPA: 1) conduct rapid capacity building needs assessment; 2) develop EA center and strengthen its capabilities; 3) assist in developing management/administrative systems and financing mechanisms; 4) assist NEPA to develop procedures and rules; 5) assist in establishing a “green environment” technical oversight office; 6) develop and deliver short training courses and regional study tours; and 7) assist in selecting two candidates for scholarships to a Master’s program in EA. These are briefly detailed below.

SUBTASK 1.1: CONDUCT RAPID CAPACITY BUILDING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Several organizations have been working with NEPA since before it was established in 2005. Notable among these is the United Nations Environment Programme, which has provided extensive training at NEPA in the areas of environmental assessment, environmental law, and multilateral environmental agreements. UNEP is also implementing a much broader National Capacity Self-Assessment project that examines the policy and legislative level, the government agency level, and the individual staff level.

Rather than repeat the work of others, ECODIT will work with NEPA, UNEP and other organizations to identify what has worked well in past and current capacity building efforts and to identify gaps – both in terms of who has been trained and the topics of training – and to design efforts that build on the achievements so far. Biodiversity conservation, for example, has not yet been covered except for biodiversity assessments training provided by Save Environment Afghanistan under ADB funding.

During the collaboration and coordination stage of preparing the first annual work plan, the ABSP team will seek updates from NEPA and major supporters to them on what has been done, how it worked, and what still needs to be done in terms of capacity building. This will not focus only on training or other skills acquisition by NEPA staff; access to information, equipment, and other aspects of building capacity of NEPA staff to perform their jobs will also be discussed. By the end of January 2008, and as needed thereafter, an institutional development specialist on the ECODIT ABSP team will facilitate teambuilding and train-the-trainer workshops involving personnel from NEPA, other ABSP target audiences, and the

ECODIT ABSP team. The outcome of this initial workshop will be a **capacity building plan** that will include both “hardware” of equipment or fixtures and “software” of skills and access to information.

Table 3: Subtask 1.1 – Capacity building needs assessment: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Conduct annual work plan consultations with NEPA and key stakeholders (e.g., UNEP) to identify gaps & how to fill them	T. Johnson M. Witz TBD STTA	December 2007	LTTA time; STTA time; workshop costs
Produce overall capacity building plan of “hardware” and “software” needs	TBD STTA M. Witz	January 2008	STTA time; LTTA time
Implement capacity building plan aspects on furniture, fixtures & equipment (FF&E)	M. Witz Finance Manager	Throughout 2008 and 2009	Slight LTTA time; procurement costs
Implement capacity building plan aspects on skills and information needs	M. Witz LT Professionals	Ongoing to March 2010	LTTA time; training costs; materials costs

In the task order, the deliverable most closely tied to this subtask is “**about 25 workshops, including team building/planning workshop and capacity building plans (part of annual work plans).**” The subtask may evolve from “conduct rapid needs assessment” into something linked to implementation of the capacity building plan(s), given that needs assessment is not anticipated to be an ongoing activity.

The 2008 target for this subtask will be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, then be further refined into a life-of-project Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) to be finalized within three weeks of submitting the first annual work plan (cf. C.2.3.b of the task order).

SUBTASK 1.2: DEVELOP ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CENTER AND STRENGTHEN ITS CAPABILITIES

The continued development of environmental assessment capabilities within NEPA’s Division of Environmental Assessment and Sustainable Development is a top priority for the Agency. Building on the EA capacity building efforts of UNEP and others, ABSP will provide formal and on-the-job training to NEPA staff forming the Environmental Assessment Center. The technical assistance may include reviewing, commenting on, and approving EA applications received for large projects with potentially significant environmental or biodiversity impacts, as well as strengthening the EA Center’s ability to monitor compliance with the Environmental Management Plans established for approved EAs.

Also, ABSP may be able to assist the EA Center to develop procedures for implementing the EA regulations developed with UNEP assistance, and explanatory materials on EA requirements (cf. subtask 3.3). As a focus on building EA capacity to mitigate biodiversity impacts, the EA Center will gain capacity to address and mitigate all types of environmental impacts.

Table 4: Subtask 1.2 – EA Center strengthening: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Identify with NEPA and UNEP skills gaps among EA Center staff and plan mitigation	M. Witz T. Johnson	December 2007	Slight LTTA time
Provide technical assistance to EA Center designed to fill knowledge gaps	M. Witz LT Professionals TBD STTA	Ongoing through 2009	LTTA time; STTA time and costs; workshop and training costs
Upon request by NEPA & UNEP, support development of EA procedures and explanatory materials for key audiences	LT Professionals M. Witz Possible TBD STTA	Possibly 2008 to mid-2009	LTTA time; workshop and publication costs; possible STTA costs

In the task order, the deliverable for this subtask is “**functional EA center within NEPA**”, which will need to be elaborated further into something measurable as work progresses. The 2008 indicator(s) and target(s) for this subtask will be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and a life-of-project indicator will be included in the final PMP as noted above.

SUBTASK 1.3: ASSIST IN DEVELOPING MANAGEMENT/ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS AND FUNDING MECHANISMS

There is agreement among NEPA senior staff and the various agencies supporting NEPA on the need for consistent and significant training in basic administrative and office skills to enable NEPA to operate as a functioning agency. These are in addition to the technical training discussed both above and below.

ABSP will assist NEPA in its efforts to develop streamlined management and administration systems, and funding mechanisms, to enable the Agency to both implement its statutory mandate and meet the requirements of international donors for receiving grants and other transfers of funds.

Table 5: Subtask 1.3 – NEPA management/admin systems: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Identify admin and mgmt skills gaps among NEPA staff and plan mitigation	M. Witz LT Professionals	December 2007	LTTA time; meetings
Provide technical assistance & training designed to fill admin/mgmt skills gaps	LT Professionals M. Witz TBD STTA	Ongoing through 2009	LTTA time; STTA time and costs; workshop and training costs

In the task order, the deliverable for this subtask is “**management and administrative systems and funding mechanisms**”, which will also need to be reworked into a measurable indicator. The 2008 indicator(s) and target(s) for this subtask will be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and a life-of-project indicator will be included in the final PMP.

SUBTASK 1.4: ASSIST NEPA TO DEVELOP PROCEDURES AND RULES

One of the ways that NEPA will be able more effectively to coordinate and monitor environmental management is through developing and disseminating clear guidelines, rules and procedures for other Ministries, private sector and community groups to follow. The ABSP team will assist NEPA and its other partners – including implementing agencies in and outside of government – in the development of manuals, brochures, and materials in print or other media (cf. subtask 3.3) and in the formulation and implementation of policies and regulations (cf. subtask 4.1). ABSP focus will concentrate on those procedures and regulations related to biodiversity conservation and the “green” environment.

Table 6: Subtask 1.4 – NEPA procedures & rules: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Conduct a “stock-taking” effort to identify the high priority items requiring materials	M. Witz LT Professionals	December 2007—January 2008	Slight LTTA time
Identify with NEPA target audiences and most appropriate medium for materials	LT Professionals M. Witz	Ongoing throughout 2008	LTTA time
Support NEPA to produce and disseminate materials to target audiences as needed	LT Professionals M. Witz	Ongoing through 2009	LTTA time; costs of production/distrib.

In the task order, the deliverable for this subtask is “**NEPA procedures and rules**”, which again will need to be more clearly defined as a measurable indicator. The 2008 indicator(s) and target(s) for this subtask will be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and a life-of-project indicator will be included in the final PMP.

SUBTASK 1.5: ASSIST IN ESTABLISHING A “GREEN ENVIRONMENT” TECHNICAL OVERSIGHT OFFICE

The “green environment” is that portion of overall environmental management that deals with issues related to renewable natural resources, including forest, fish, wildlife, and water resources (cf. Chapters 6 and 5, respectively, in the Environment Law). This includes but is not limited to considerations relating to management of natural areas and mitigating the effects on these from development and use.

A need has been identified for NEPA to have a specialized office able to provide technical oversight for evaluating and advising on the impacts of activities related to the “green environment.” Upon request by NEPA, the ABSP team will provide technical assistance in assessing the rationale for such an office and if determined to be necessary, in formulating and implementing its composition, areas of responsibility, and coordination and reporting mechanisms. This latter aspect may be especially important in clarifying roles and responsibilities compared to those of the EA Center (cf. subtask 1.2 above). If one is established, the objective of this office could be to oversee NEPA’s efforts in implementing the green environmental provisions of the Environment Law.

Table 7: Subtask 1.5 – Green environment technical office: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Discuss with NEPA leadership the need for a green env. technical oversight office	T. Johnson	1st–3rd quarters 2008	Slight LTTA time
On request, provide technical assistance in development and operation of office	LT Professionals T. Johnson	Possibly ongoing through 2009	LTTA time; possible trainings / workshops

In the task order, the deliverable for this subtask is “**functional Green Environment technical oversight office (subject to approval by NEPA)**” and carries the same need to be reworked into a measurable indicator. The 2008 indicator(s) and target(s) for this subtask will be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and a life-of-project indicator will be included in the final PMP.

SUBTASK 1.6: DEVELOP AND DELIVER SHORT TRAINING COURSES AND REGIONAL STUDY TOURS

UNEP, UNDP, and others have provided courses on various topics involving NEPA and other government ministries and agencies. Building on those, the ABSP team will identify gaps and then offer tailored short-term training courses designed to complement and supplement these efforts. One area of particular need already identified in preliminary discussions with NEPA have been courses for staff on administrative subjects such as accounting, procurement, and other aspects of financial management, monitoring and evaluation, and human resource management (cf. subtask 1.3 above). An anticipated outcome of these courses is that NEPA and its partners involved in biodiversity conservation have administrative systems robust enough to qualify for project funding from donor agencies.

In addition to the administrative and management courses, however, are a wide range of needs related to the technical skills of NEPA personnel and those of implementing agencies. Those technical skills areas will be the focus of this subtask. The ABSP will work with NEPA to identify, organize, and deliver (or support the delivery of) technical skills-oriented short courses as needed on environmental assessment, biodiversity conservation, ecotourism, and the planning and management of protected areas, watersheds, wetlands, and other ecosystems where conservation and sustainable use are priorities.

Another element of building technical skills capacity within NEPA and implementing organizations could be learning from experiences of other countries in the region on similar matters. In consultation with NEPA and partners, the ABSP team plans to organize one or two regional study tours to relevant countries with similar challenges that also have useful experiences to share.

Table 8: Subtask 1.6 – Training courses & regional study tours: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Identify technical skills gaps among NEPA staff and plan appropriate short courses	M. Witz LT Professionals	December 2007— January 2008	Slight LTTA time
Provide short-course training designed to fill technical skills gaps among NEPA staff	LT Professionals TBD STTA M. Witz	Ongoing through 2009	LTTA time; STTA time and costs; workshop and training costs
Identify and organize 1-2 regional study tours on relevant priority topics	M. Witz LT Professionals TBD STTA	One study tour each in 2008 and 2009	LTTA time; STTA time and costs; regional study tour costs

In the task order, the two deliverables for this subtask are “**about 12 short training courses**” and “**two regional study tours**.” The 2008 targets will be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and the measurable deliverables above will be included in the PMP.

SUBTASK 1.7: ASSIST IN SELECTING TWO CANDIDATES FOR SCHOLARSHIPS TO A MASTER’S PROGRAM IN EA

Building the long-term capacity of NEPA to fulfill its mandate also requires that long-term professional training be provided to build graduate-level skills sets and analytical abilities within NEPA. There is an ongoing program of USAID that supports scholarships for MSc-level professional development among personnel in different ministries. The ABSP team will work with NEPA to operate a selection system to identify two professional staff from NEPA to undergo Master’s-level training, with emphasis on the “green environment” portions of the NEPA mandate.

Preliminary discussions with NEPA have identified the need to form a selection committee which would develop selection criteria and operate the selection process in an open and transparent manner. One idea already discussed would be to have the scholarships be awarded through a competitive process that may be open to all NEPA personnel who meet minimum qualifications (e.g., holder of a BS/BA degree, have proficiency in English, are able to develop a specific area of research interest appropriate for MSc level, and other qualification as the selection committee may decide). The training will be funded and managed through another USAID program, but the ABSP team will assist NEPA with candidate selection.

Table 9: Subtask 1.7 – MSc scholars selection: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Coordinate with NEPA to form a selection committee, develop selection criteria, and operate a transparent selection process	T. Johnson M. Witz LT Professionals	By end of 2 nd quarter 2008	Slight LTTA time

In the task order, the deliverable for this subtask is “**assistance in selection of two professional staff from NEPA for Master’s level scholarships**”, which may be measured by active participation by one or more ECODIT ABSP team members on a selection committee or panel established for the purpose of candidate selection. Active participation shall mean attendance by one or more ABSP team member(s) at each selection committee or panel meeting, and performance of interim tasks as the committee or panel may assign.

The 2008 target(s) for this subtask will be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and the measurable deliverables above will be included in the PMP.

3.2 TASK #2: NATIONAL COORDINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

Several donors and organizations are supporting efforts to strengthen the environmental management capabilities of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (IRoA), and more programs are being designed. UNEP and the Wildlife Conservation Society (with USAID support) have made efforts to improve donor and inter-sectoral coordination of environmental programs – e.g., biodiversity working group, Band-i-Amir National Park coordination – yet there is no designated body today that manages and disseminates information related to environmental activities and programs being implemented in the country.

One proposal has been that a national coordinating body be established capable of harmonizing the various environmental development activities. This body could act as the interface between the international and national environmental NGO community, the donors, and the government. It has been suggested that a National Coordination of Environmental Programs Committee (NCEP Committee) be established to coordinate and monitor environmental programs in Afghanistan.

Envisioned to be comprised of relevant stakeholders – government, private sector, NGOs, and donors – such a committee might review for comment new programs; evaluate effectiveness of programs; identify significant successes, lessons learned and best practices; and advise the government on environmental management needs. NCEP Committee leadership and membership is suggested to be voluntary and without remuneration.

The ECODIT ABSP team recognizes the vital role that a NCEP Committee could play in providing NEPA both the technical capability and broader legitimacy required for it to fulfill its mandate as national coordinator of environmental programs. Without a transparent, prestigious, and widely representative body to oversee this function, NEPA could have a mandate to coordinate national environmental programs but lack the political, financial or human resources necessary to perform this important work.

We will approach the challenges through a two-fold process to build a foundation for coordination of environmental programs, through (1) exploring the need for and – if needed – the establishment and strengthening of a NCEP Committee, and (2) developing a broader consensus of the Committee's role in overall national development efforts. These elements could be mutually reinforcing: As the Committee demonstrates its increased capability and professionalism to stakeholders, the latter will grant it greater legitimacy; likewise, as the Committee gains legitimacy, its internal operations will become stronger.

Two activities would be required to accomplish improved coordination of environmental programs in Afghanistan: 1) assist in establishing a National Coordination of Environmental Programs committee – if analysis shows such a body to be necessary; and 2) provide technical and financial assistance to the NCEP Committee should one be formed.

SUBTASK 2.1: ASSIST IN ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL COORDINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

One of the first actions to be taken regarding possible establishment of a NCEP Committee as proposed would be to conduct broad stakeholder consultations to determine whether the National Environmental Advisory Council established under Article 11 of the Environment Law would meet the perceived needs for a national coordinating body. In other words, could the Council perform the functions outlined above or is a separate body still required? A critical part of answering this question will be consulting with the Director General of NEPA and his advisors on whether the Council is likely to have members on it who represent the interests of the private sector, NGOs, donors and other stakeholders as the NCEP Committee might.

If a consensus among stakeholders is that the NCEP Committee is necessary and would perform a unique function that adds value to environmental management, the Committee's role could be to provide an interface between the international and national environmental NGO community, the donors, and the government. The Committee may also be able to accept development funds and donations from public and private sources. As such, their mandate could differ from that of the inter-agency Committee for Environmental Coordination (CEC) established under Article 10 of the Environment Law and whose

secretariat is provided by the Directorate General of NEPA. The main function of the CEC is to mainstream environmental concerns across ministries and agencies and in particular to raise the level of awareness of the need to comply with the EA requirements under the upcoming EA regulations.

The ECODIT ABSP team will work with NEPA senior staff to facilitate discussions among government officials, international donors, NGOs, private sector, and other interested parties concerning the need, mandate and best form and organizational arrangements for the proposed NCEP committee. The team will work with NEPA staff to develop an “Issues and Options” paper regarding the proposed NCEP Committee and organize a participatory workshop to present and discuss the paper and help the parties reach agreement on the need for, and mandate and organizational form of such a voluntary committee under the leadership of NEPA. Should the consensus be that a Committee is valuable, ABSP also will assist in developing position profiles and job descriptions for a secretariat of paid staff to implement Committee functions on a day-to-day basis. During the first six to 12 months it might be possible for NEPA staff, assisted by the ABSP team, to perform this function on a part-time basis, but a small full-time staff will be needed if the committee is to function effectively.

Table 10: Subtask 2.1 – Establish NCEP Committee: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Conduct broad stakeholder consultations on the need for and role of a NCEP Cmte.	T. Johnson LT Professionals	1st – 2nd quarter 2008	Slight LTTA time; some travel costs
Draft Issues & Options paper summarizing consultations and present at workshop	T. Johnson LT Professionals Possible TBD STTA	By end 2nd quarter 2008	LTTA time; possible STTA time and costs; workshop costs
Pending consensus, support NEPA to establish NCEP Committee and provide initial secretariat support	LT Professionals T. Johnson	By end 3rd quarter 2008	LTTA time

The two deliverables for this subtask are “**Issues and Options paper and participatory workshop on proposed NCEP committee**” and “**formation of NCEP committee, following agreement on its mandate and form.**” It is expected that both of these tasks will be completed within the 2008 work plan period. The targets for this subtask therefore are the two deliverables cited above. These will be listed in the initial M&E plan, and in the PMP.

SUBTASK 2.2: PROVIDE TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE NCEP COMMITTEE

With the caveat that establishment of the NCEP Committee depends on consensus for its need and mandate, the ABSP team is prepared to provide technical and financial support to the Committee during the life of the project, gradually receding from primary Secretariat duties as competence and confidence grow. Specific technical assistance may be provided based on the tasks assumed by the committee and the needs of each member. In addition to operational guidance, another area where ABSP technical assistance may be required is on the specific ecological, social and economic implications of various environmental management decisions. Achieving a widely-accepted balance of conservation, development, and political considerations will be crucial for the NCEP Committee to have broad legitimacy and therefore the wherewithal – in credibility and resources – to carry out its responsibilities.

Technical and financial assistance to the Committee and its administrative unit may include:

- Support for the development of internal operational guidelines, such as meeting procedures, reporting requirements, financing mechanisms, and guidelines for accepting funding from international donors and private sector;
- Support for the development of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the committee and NEPA;
- Providing venues, funding and administrative/secretarial support to Committee meetings and operations for one year;

- Provide limited furniture and equipment to the Committee, and to NEPA in general, during years 1 and 2 of the ABSP;
- Support to the establishment of the NCEP Committee Secretariat within one year and technical assistance to the Secretariat over the remainder of the ABSP project;
- Assistance in obtaining funding, both initially and on an ongoing operational support basis, from organizations with a stake in the operations of the committee.

A related and critical factor in insuring credibility and resources for the NCEP Committee to operate sustainably will be to identify and develop funding sources, perhaps a small endowment. Large amounts of funding are not anticipated to be required; if participation in meetings is viewed by some members as a mechanism for obtaining “allowances,” membership is not likely to be as committed or as voluntary as envisioned. However, there are modest costs involved in securing a venue; providing refreshments and travel; collecting, storing and copying reports; developing and circulating an agenda; summarizing and communicating meeting results to broader groups of stakeholders; and monitoring progress on action items between meetings. Therefore, one of the tasks for the ABSP team will be to explore options for funding and to develop appropriate mechanisms to obtain and administer funds transparently. ECODIT recommends that the NCEP Committee not be a grant-funded committee; accordingly, ABSP plans to help the Committee develop sustainable sources of funding for its low-budget operations.

Table 11: Subtask 2.2 – Support NCEP Committee: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Provide secretariat support, technical and financial assistance to NCEP Committee for one year from establishment	LT Professionals T. Johnson	For 12 months from Committee being established	LTTA time; Cmte. operational costs; workshop costs
Provide continued technical assistance to NCEP Committee throughout ABSP	LT Professionals Possible TBD STTA T. Johnson	Ongoing through March 2010	LTTA time; possible STTA time & costs; workshop costs

The deliverable for this subtask is “**Technical Assistance to the committee, including: (a) operational guidelines; (b) Memorandum of Agreement between the committee and NEPA; (c) secretarial support to committee meetings / operations for one year; (d) establishment of the NCEP committee secretariat within one year; and (e) technical assistance to the secretariat over the remainder of the ABSP life.**” The last of these may require a more measurable definition, which may be elaborated in subsequent work plans. The 2008 target(s) for this subtask will be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and the measurable deliverables above will be included in the PMP, with the addition of a more measurable indication of performance for item (e) above.

3.3 TASK #3: PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

As part of its preparation for the 1386 Budget⁹, NEPA identified a prioritization of projects in keeping with the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) process. The highest priority project listed¹⁰ was Public Outreach and Awareness. To quote the text¹¹:

“Public participation is a key feature of the Environment Law and the EIA regulations, and will similarly become a component of future environmental laws and regulations. As a coordinating body, NEPA’s role includes helping to inform stakeholders, including the Afghan public, of their rights under the legal and regulatory framework. Furthermore, NEPA will initiate a public awareness campaign via TV and radio and work with the Ministry of Education to develop environmental materials to teach Afghan citizens about the relevance and importance of the environment to their daily lives.”

The Environment Law is new, and applies to other government agencies as well as the private sector. Because for many years activities were conducted without control or requirements, the understanding of either the legal requirements or environmental concerns has been left out of development and design planning. This includes both direct and externality effects of implementation of development decisions. Often development investment is considered so essential that all other concerns are secondary, including environmental impact – resulting in river diversion, uncontrolled pesticide use, introduction of agriculture systems that have severely impacted the natural environment, and other such practices.

In order to provide appropriate guidance to the public, developers, and other ministries and agencies of the government, a training and public education/information program has been started by UNEP and UNOPS. The ABSP team will build on the work already done by NEPA and NGOs to incorporate lessons from these public outreach activities and fashion interventions that complement rather than duplicate ongoing or previous public education and outreach programs. This also will include, for example, the Environmental Education/Public Outreach Center established near the wetlands of Kole Hashmat Khan with support from the Afghan Conservation Corps.

The ABSP team will assist NEPA in developing a clear communication, outreach and education program to insure that environmental requirements are widely disseminated and understood by the government, private sector, nongovernmental organizations and the general public. While activities sponsored by other agencies have focused on urban industrial environmental issues, the ABSP team will support “green” initiatives. As part of that effort, ECODIT will obtain copies of relevant documents produced by USAID’s GREENCOM project and make them available to ABSP project staff and NEPA.

The ABSP team will work with NEPA staff to build the Agency’s capacity to disseminate information to a wide range of stakeholders about the Environmental Law; the role and mandate of NEPA; the Agency’s policies, programs, and regulations; environmental conservation requirements; and community-based environmental management, with a focus on biodiversity and the green environment. The team will use public education and outreach as a tool to both increase environmental compliance and assist in regulatory and policy development by seeking input and comment from the public on draft regulations or policies.

These efforts will seek to increase environmental awareness at all levels and disseminate best natural resource management practices from Afghanistan and other countries in the region and elsewhere. All outreach materials developed by NEPA with support from the ABSP team will be adapted to the Afghan context, use national or regional languages, and respect Afghan customs and traditions.

Five activities are required to develop and implement a public education and outreach program aimed at increasing awareness among various audiences about the need for better environmental management in Afghanistan: 1) assess communications needs; 2) establish an information resource center at NEPA; 3) support the production of publications and multi-media outreach; 4) work with NEPA to improve environmental education; and 5) train NEPA and other stakeholders on environmental outreach.

⁹ Ministry Strategy (February 2007; the Afghan budget year 1386 corresponds to 2008 in the Gregorian calendar.

¹⁰ Op. cit. page 6/8 (table) Section Six: Prioritization of Projects for 1386 Budget.

¹¹¹¹ Op. cit., page 5/8. Section Four: Programming.

SUBTASK 3.1: ASSESS COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS

To ensure that communications interventions are coordinated, the ABSP Team will carry out a rapid needs assessment in the early phase of the project. This assessment will lay the foundation for a communications strategy with public education and outreach interventions that are mutually reinforcing and well-coordinated. The assessment shall include a “gap analysis” of communications work to support environmental governance at the national, regional and local levels. The strategy shall be re-evaluated mid-way through the project to confirm the communications strategy’s effectiveness and relevance. Special effort will be given to understanding how to structure information that both articulates a convincing case for sustainable natural resource management as well as delivers clear guidelines on NEPA and government policies. The ABSP team will gauge different forms of public outreach access (e.g., print, radio, TV) to different population segments and stakeholders to ensure that public outreach is targeted appropriately to reach the right constituents.

Table 12: Subtask 3.1 – Communications needs assessment: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Conduct rapid communications needs assessment & design appropriate strategy	M. Witz LT Professionals Possible TBD STTA	By end March 2008	LTTA time; some travel costs; possible STTA time & costs

The deliverable for this subtask is “**rapid communication needs assessment**”, which is expected to be completed within the first work plan year. The indicator for this subtask in the M&E plan to accompany the 2008 annual work plan will be the report of that assessment.

SUBTASK 3.2: ESTABLISH INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTER AT NEPA

NEPA also hopes to develop its capabilities as a source of environmental information. The ABSP team will work with the Research, Policy, and Information Division to help it establish an Information Resource Center that will serve as a public library on environmental topics. ABSP will supply the Center with a wide range of environmental books and publications, with a focus on biodiversity conservation and natural resource management, and develop staff capabilities to manage the Center (inventory, document tracking and cataloguing, and other library management functions).

Table 13: Subtask 3.2 – NEPA information resource center: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Develop list of publications for accession into the Information Resource Center	M. Witz LT Professionals	1st – 3rd quarter 2008	LTTA time; accession & acquisition costs
Conduct training of NEPA staff on library operations, provide technical assistance	LT Professionals Possible TBD STTA M. Witz	Ongoing through 2009	LTTA time; possible STTA; training costs

The deliverable for this subtask is “**information resource center established and functional within NEPA.**” The latter part of this will need to be defined in a more measurable way. The 2008 target(s) for this subtask will be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and a measurable indicator of “functional” will be included in the life-of-project PMP.

SUBTASK 3.3: SUPPORT THE PRODUCTION OF PUBLICATIONS AND MULTI-MEDIA OUTREACH

This subtask contains two elements: print materials and other media (video, sound, electronic). For the print portion, the ABSP team will work with NEPA staff to produce and disseminate pamphlets and other publications on select topics of importance to NEPA and the various audiences of environment stakeholders in Afghanistan and beyond. These topics may include, as examples, the requirements of environmental regulations and policies, best practices in natural resources management, biodiversity in

Afghanistan, promotion of community-based natural resource management and others. In addition to these materials, ABSP will provide support to NEPA staff in publishing the NEPA Magazine on a regular basis and up to acceptable standards.

In the non-print media portion, which may in fact be more appropriate for many Afghan audiences, ABSP will explore with NEPA the use of radio, TV, billboards, and other visual and multi-media platforms. These also may include a NEPA website, aimed at an international audience. The multi-media efforts will seek to give NEPA broader reach in spreading information on environmental protection and its importance for sustainable development. In addition, ABSP could encourage public information messages through the CBRM small grants program (Task 5). Such local activities may use media such as puppet shows, environmental fairs, or other community-based activities. The ABSP team members will review documents from the GREENCOM project in developing this multi-media program.

Table 14: Subtask 3.3 – NEPA media production / publication: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Support NEPA Division of Research, Policy and Information to design and implement a program of relevant print materials	M. Witz LT Professionals TBD STTA	Ongoing through 2009	LTTA time; STTA time & costs; production and publication costs
Support NEPA Division of Research, Policy and Information to design and implement a multi-media information program	M. Witz LT Professionals TBD STTA	Ongoing through 2009	LTTA time; STTA time & costs; production and distribution costs

The deliverable for this subtask is “**assistance to production of publications and multi-media, in particular the NEPA magazine.**” The 2008 target(s) for this subtask will be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and the measurable deliverable above will be included in the PMP [n.b. it is not expected that “assistance” will be measured in financial terms].

SUBTASK 3.4: WORK WITH NEPA TO IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

With support from UNEP, NEPA is already working with the Ministry of Higher Education to develop environmental education curricula. ABSP will complement those efforts, with recommendations tailored to specific grade levels to maximize and sustain results. For example, in primary education curricula, the ABSP team could work with NEPA and its counterparts in the government to develop educational programs that promote children’s sense of nature and the environment as important to their community and identity. At the tertiary level, special emphasis would be on training a cadre of professionals to address environmental concerns in a results-oriented manner and become effective civil servants or advocates for environmental protection. ABSP will identify and provide appropriate materials that teachers can use in different grade levels. The team will coordinate with the USAID-funded, AED-implemented Higher Education Program to develop higher education programs in Afghanistan, working with the Ministry of Higher Education.

Table 15: Subtask 3.4 – Environmental education: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Coordinate with NEPA and UNEP to identify gaps in current Env. Ed. Efforts	M. Witz LT Professionals	By end March 2008	Slight LTTA time
Work with NEPA and UNEP to assess Env. Ed. Programs, recommend improvements	M. Witz LT Professionals TBD STTA	Ongoing throughout 2008	LTTA time; STTA time and costs
Provide technical assistance to support NEPA in developing Env. Ed. materials	LT Professionals TBD STTA M. Witz	Ongoing through 2009	LTTA time; STTA time & costs; possibly materials costs

The deliverable for this subtask is “**practical recommendations and support to improving environmental education.**” The latter part of this will need to be defined in a more measurable way. The 2008 target(s) for this subtask will be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and measurable indicator of “support to improving” will be included in the life-of-project PMP.

SUBTASK 3.5: TRAIN NEPA AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS ON ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

The ABSP team will design and deliver targeted training programs for specific stakeholders, from NEPA and other national government agencies, to local government agencies and NGOs, on communication strategies and vehicles to promote increased environmental awareness and improved information dissemination. ABSP will organize workshops to introduce good examples of media and outreach tools and materials developed in Afghanistan and around the world, by USAID (e.g., GREENCOM program), IUCN, UNEP, and others. ABSP also will facilitate brainstorming discussions of the ways to adapt those models to the Afghan context – e.g., available resources or lack of reliable infrastructure to transmit information — and assist public outreach staff to generate and implement action plans to help them do their job.

Table 16: Subtask 3.5 – NEPA training on public outreach: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Coordinate with NEPA staff to identify training needs related to outreach efforts	M. Witz LT Professionals	By end June 2008	LTTA time
Design and deliver training programs to address identified needs	LT Professionals TBD STTA M. Witz	Ongoing through March 2010	LTTA time; STTA time & costs; training courses

The deliverable for this subtask is “**training courses delivered on public education and outreach.**” These courses will contribute toward achievement of the 25 workshops mentioned under Task #1 above. The 2008 target(s) for this subtask will be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and measurable deliverable above will be included in the PMP.

3.4 TASK #4: ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION AND FINANCING

The Environment Law has been adopted but regulations for procedures and enforcement have not yet been promulgated. Draft EIA regulations and draft Protected Areas Management regulations have been developed with assistance from UNEP and WCS, respectively, with the latter sponsored by USAID. Other than the protected areas, however, procedures and regulations for no other section of Chapter Six in the Environment Law (i.e., Biodiversity and Natural Resources Conservation and Management) have been initiated. The other portions of that chapter include Management of Natural Resources Outside Protected Areas (including rangelands), Sustainable Use and Conservation of Species (covering harvest rates and recovery), Species Trade, and Access to Genetic Resources. These gaps leave enforcement in those important ecosystems at risk:

The ABSP team will work with NEPA staff to strengthen the Agency's capabilities to develop, implement, and enforce Afghanistan's legal environmental requirements, especially in biodiversity conservation and the natural resource use. Our efforts will seek to complement and leverage regulatory development efforts undertaken with the support of other donors and partners.

NEPA also must become at least partially self-sufficient financially. This can be achieved by creatively exploring both traditional and innovative mechanisms for NEPA to develop long-term financial bases from which to obtain the resources required to continue implementing its mandate after the currently high levels of external assistance begin to wane.

SUBTASK 4.1: REGULATION

With a focus on natural resources provisions of the Environment Law (especially Chapter Six mentioned above but also Chapter Five covering water resource conservation and management), the ABSP team will work with NEPA, other USAID partners, other donors working with NEPA, and other government agencies to assist in developing regulations pursuant to the 2006 Environmental Law. So far, the ozone regulations are the only ones promulgated under the Law. The EIA and Protected Areas regulations are expected to be debated soon.

In addition to these regulations developed by NEPA with support of UNEP, WCS and others, a Forest Law has been drafted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock as has an Endangered Species Law (with assistance from WCS). At the outset of the project, ABSP will assess the current status of the various drafts to take stock of who is doing what and where the project can provide additional support to help NEPA finalize these regulations. The ABSP team also will provide support to NEPA in encouraging more compliance with regulations, in particular through increased public awareness (cf. Task 3) and encouragement of Community-Based Resource Management that will improve compliance with relevant regulations.

Table 17: Subtask 4.1 – Environmental regulation: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Conduct consultations to identify where ABSP might assist NEPA in moving draft regulations to gazettment, if needed	T. Johnson LT Professionals	By end March 2008	LTTA time
Work with NEPA to initiate processes for development of regulations on other areas having biodiversity importance	T. Johnson LT Professionals	Ongoing throughout 2008	LTTA time; travel costs; workshops
Provide technical assistance to NEPA staff on implementing and enforcing regulation	T. Johnson LT Professionals TBD STTA	Ongoing through March 2010	LTTA time; STTA time & costs; travel costs; workshops

The deliverable for this subtask is “technical assistance in formulating and enforcing regulations, especially in biodiversity conservation and the ‘green’ environment.” The term “technical assistance” will need to be defined in a more measurable way, perhaps related to level of effort (LOE), or to outcomes of the technical assistance. The 2008 indicator(s) and target(s) for this subtask will be

defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and a measurable indicator of “technical assistance” will be included in the life-of-project PMP.

SUBTASK 4.2: FINANCING

As a government agency, in theory NEPA should be financed through standard government budgeting processes. However, many governments in developed as well as developing countries do not always fully appreciate the important contributions that biodiversity conservation makes to economic development. Therefore, NEPA will probably need to rely on a combination of five possible funding sources in order to meet this objective, without over-reliance on any one:

1. Allocations from the National Development Budget, where strengthening of the environmental management capacity is among the highest priorities in the sector;
2. Fees assessed on users of the technical services provided by NEPA in such areas as environmental assessments and other related services;
3. Fees assessed for environmental services provided by resources managed by NEPA or its partners (protected areas, watersheds, forests, rangelands);
4. Annual increments from an endowed trust, NGOs, or other possible investment fund established for this purpose; and
5. Donor financing of either core NEPA functions or specific areas of interest such as protected areas, policy review, etc.

Exploring and developing each of these options will be a high priority in the first year of ABSP project implementation, in close coordination and collaboration with other entities providing assistance to NEPA. Rather than select a single funding source, ABSP will support NEPA in developing a detailed strategy combining several of these options as well as others that may be identified. The aim will be to have NEPA and its oversight board design and implement a long-term (perhaps 10-year) strategic plan for achieving sufficient financial resources to implement its mandate on an ongoing basis.

The ABSP Team Leader - Senior Environmental Advisor will lead these analyses and strategic planning efforts, in close coordination and collaboration with relevant stakeholders, especially the Director General of NEPA and its other senior management officials. This will be supplemented by targeted short-term technical assistance to provide support in developing and analyzing the options available to NEPA, and drafting a Strategic Financing Plan within the first 12 months of task order implementation. Making this Plan operational is expected to last beyond the ABSP project, so activities in subsequent years will concentrate on building the internal capacity of NEPA to implement its Strategic Financing Plan.

Table 18: Subtask 4.2 – Sustainable NEPA financing: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Conduct consultations and analyses on financing option, with NEPA sr. leadership	T. Johnson TBD STTA	1st – 3rd quarter 2008	LTTA time; STTA time & costs; workshop
Draft 10-year Strategic Financing Plan with NEPA senior leadership	T. Johnson TBD STTA	By end Dec. 2008	LTTA time; STTA time & costs; workshops
Support NEPA in implementing 10-year Strategic Financing Plan; provide training	T. Johnson Possible TBD STTA	Ongoing through March 2010	LTTA time; STTA time & costs; training cost

In the task order, the two deliverables for this subtask are “**proposed fee structure and schedule for services that NEPA will provide, including an analysis of how other government agencies would pay or not pay for NEPA’s services**” and “**proposed revisions to the Environment Law and/or environmental regulations to allow NEPA to charge donors and investors for EAs and other services provided.**” One 2008 target stated in the task order is a Strategic Financing Plan drafted. Other targets may be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and the measurable deliverables above will be included in the PMP.

3.5 TASK #5: COMMUNITY-BASED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

In the task order, this Task is described as follows: “This task will give NEPA personnel experience in (1) analyzing grant applications and managing grants to NGOs and community groups and (2) assisting such groups in preparing grant applications, carrying out on-the-ground activities, and reporting technical results and financial matters.” The Request for Task Order Proposals carried similar language.

What appears to be missing from this statement is full consideration of the following factors:

1. NEPA is a very new agency that according to its senior officials lacks basic administrative capacity to perform its internal functions (cf. subtask 1.3);
2. The mandate of NEPA as defined in the Environment Law of 2007 is “**coordinating and monitoring** conservation and rehabilitation of the environment” [emphasis added] without mention of being an implementing agency among its Functions and Powers (Article 9);
3. One reason for the low-level tensions between NEPA and some other agencies of the government – e.g., Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock; Ministry of Energy and Water – is the perception of NEPA as competing with these agencies in areas of field-level implementation;
4. Current field experience and academic analyses of community-based natural resource management show that grant financing of activities does not achieve either the conservation or development objectives of these programs and is unsustainable, while successes have been achieved in recent years with community-public-private partnerships and even commercial bank lending to natural resource-based enterprises; and
5. NEPA does not have the financial resources to continue providing grants beyond the ABSP project period and may therefore be unable to sustain these efforts beyond 2010.

The Team Leader – Senior Environmental Advisor respectfully recommends that this Task be slightly modified to remove emphasis on building grant-making and grant management capability within NEPA; rather, another entity could be identified or established for this purpose if USAID and NEPA agree that grant financing of CBRM is a sustainable mechanism for achieving conservation in Afghanistan¹².

This recommendation notwithstanding, the ECODIT ABSP team will promote the involvement of communities and NGOs in biodiversity and forest conservation activities that contribute to equitable economic development and develop demonstration models that can be promoted and disseminated nationwide. Grant program activities may include habitat management, green belt development, protected area conservation, or ecosystem rehabilitation that enhances the conservation and management of renewable natural resources.

Four subtasks are required to operate successfully a small grants program that will achieve the objective of promoting conservation and rehabilitation of the environment by facilitating community involvement in environmental management: 1) design the CBRM small grants program and establish an advisory committee; 2) prepare and issue requests for applications; 3) award grants and build NGO capacity; and 4) monitor grant implementation and build NEPA monitoring capacity.

SUBTASK 5.1: DESIGN THE CBRM SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM AND ESTABLISH AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Soon after submission of the first annual work plan, the Team Leader and Organizational Strengthening Specialist will begin consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, donors, international and national NGOs, and other development projects to draw on their experiences with grant program operations in the Afghan context. The ABSP team will seek from those organizations active in field-level biodiversity conservation and environmental management to learn about the successes and difficulties – approaches that work and those that should be avoided – for implementing community-based environmental conservation projects.

¹² This recommendation and the foregoing paragraph are the personal opinions of the Team Leader, based on his 20+ years of field experience with CBNRM in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It does not necessarily reflect or imply the views of ECODIT, USAID, or NEPA.

Following these consultations, the ABSP team will conduct a workshop with relevant stakeholders to present and discuss the objectives of the CBRM program and brainstorm together on the best possible approaches to design and implement the small grants program. Two or three similar workshops may be conducted in target regions of the country, chosen in concert with NEPA and USAID. These workshops also will provide an early indication of the number and capacity of NGOs in target regions and serve as a platform to begin informing community groups about the small grants program.

The ABSP team also will discuss with NEPA senior staff the need for an Advisory Committee to support the implementation of the CBRM grant program. Such a committee could advise NEPA and the ABSP team on selection criteria and operational aspects of providing small grants to community-based groups in Afghanistan. The Advisory Committee may include representatives of USAID, donors and international NGOs active in biodiversity conservation and natural resource management, other government agencies with experience in local development, and academicians or other relevant stakeholders.

Table 19: Subtask 5.1 – Design CBRM small grants program: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Conduct consultations with relevant persons and organizations on design	M. Witz T. Johnson Possible TBD STTA	1st – 2nd quarter 2008	LTTA time; possible STTA time & costs; travel and workshop costs
Establish advisory committee to develop selection criteria and operational aspects	M. Witz Finance Manager	1st – 2nd quarter 2008	LTTA time; meeting costs; travel costs
Submit draft design and selection criteria to USAID for approval (cf. ADS 302.3.4.8)	M. Witz T. Johnson	30 June 2008	LTTA time

The deliverable for this subtask is “**final design of CBRM program based on extensive local consultations**”, which is expected to be completed within the first work plan year. The indicator for this subtask in the M&E plan to accompany the 2008 annual work plan will be that design.

SUBTASK 5.2: PREPARE AND ISSUE REQUESTS FOR APPLICATIONS

Building on the results of the planning workshop and guidance from the Advisory Committee, the ABSP team will recommend target regions, project themes, and criteria for NGO eligibility and finalize them with the approval of USAID and NEPA. The CBRM program will encourage work (1) outside volatile areas such as provinces in the South and East, (2) in areas of high biodiversity that are under threat, and (3) in threatened forests of biological significance. The CBRM program may target areas with poverty; diversity of ecosystems to include rangelands, steppes, wetlands, forests; ecosystems at different altitudes; and potential for biodiversity-derived economic opportunities, such as ecotourism (e.g., Band-i-Amir). Although a Request for Applications is named in the task order, an Annual Program Statement may offer greater flexibility in operation of the small grants program, considering its objectives.

Table 20: Subtask 5.2 – Prepare and release RFA: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Upon USAID approval of design, draft and release widely a Request for Applications	M. Witz Possible TBD STTA	By 30 Sept. 2008	LTTA time; possible STTA time & costs; publicizing costs

The deliverable for this subtask is “**requests for applications in two stages (concept then detail)**”, which also is expected to be completed within the first work plan year. The indicator for this subtask in the M&E plan to accompany the 2008 annual work plan will be an RFA released.

SUBTASK 5.3: AWARD GRANTS AND BUILD NGO CAPACITY

Recognizing the limited capacity of local NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) in the country, and the capacity building aspects of the ABSP, ECODIT expects to phase the award of grants in two stages. In the first stage, ECODIT shall invite eligible NGOs/CBOs to submit project concept papers, including an outline of a proposed work plan. ECODIT shall select concept papers that offer the best chances of success to the CBRM program and provide very small grants (estimated at \$500 to \$1,000) to NGO proponents to help them develop their concept further. The ABSP team then will issue a detailed Request for Applications (RFA) to NGOs whose concepts meet established criteria. The ABSP team will review the applications received and either recommend consideration by the full Advisory Committee, return it for more information, or reject the application. Upon Advisory Committee review, applications may be rejected, returned for revision, or recommended to USAID for approval of award. An open application period is anticipated rather than fixed deadlines for submitting detailed applications (Stage II). The task order does not, however, provide ECODIT the authority to award Grants Under Contracts. Upon receipt of such authority by the Contracting Officer, ECODIT expects to award 10-20 small grants worth \$50,000 to \$100,000 each upon approval of each award by USAID. In order that grant implementation may be completed within the ABSP project period, no awards will be made after 30 September 2009.

Table 21: Subtask 5.3 – Small grant awards: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Assess concept papers submitted and award micro-grants to proponents for preparation of full applications	M. Witz LT Professionals	Ongoing from Sept. 2008 to March 2009	LTTA time
Review applications and reject, return or recommend for Advisory Cmte. review	M. Witz LT Professionals	Ongoing from Sept. 2008 to June 2009	LTTA time; travel costs for validation
Upon recommendation of Advisory Cmte. submit applications for USAID approval	M. Witz T. Johnson	Ongoing from Sept. 2008 to Sept. 2009	Slight LTTA time
Upon approval of award by USAID, sign grant agreements with awardees	T. Johnson	Ongoing from Sept. 2008 to Sept. 2009	Slight LTTA time

In the task order, the three deliverables for this subtask are “project concept papers selected for further development”, “NGO outreach and capacity building program” and “10-20 NGO grants awarded.” The second of these deliverables will need to be defined in a more measurable way, perhaps related to numbers of workshops or training events conducted (contributing to those described under Task #1 above), or to results of the capacity building program. The 2008 indicators and targets for this subtask will be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and a measurable indicator of “NGO outreach and capacity building program” will be included in the PMP.

SUBTASK 5.4: MONITOR GRANT IMPLEMENTATION AND BUILD NEPA CAPACITY

As noted above, development of capacity within NEPA to award and administer small grants may be one burden too many for a new and self-described weak institution. Nevertheless, NEPA involvement in the small grants program may be an excellent learning opportunity for staff to develop skills as monitoring agents, with particular focus on adherence by implementing organizations to the provisions of the Environment Law which apply. These may include *inter alia* those related to the following:

- Management of water resources (Article 34),
- Protected areas management (Articles 38-41),
- Management of natural resources outside of protected areas (Articles 44-45),
- Sustainable use and conservation of species (Articles 46-53),
- Species trade (Articles 55-57), and
- Access to genetic resources (Articles 59-63).

The ABSP team will use on-the-job training and other methods to build the capacity of NEPA staff in the regional hubs to monitor grant implementation for adherence to the Environment Law. NGO awardees and NEPA regional hub staff will prepare quarterly reports and submit them to NEPA central office and to the ECODIT ABSP team. Progress reports and findings from the CBRM program will become part of the Information Resource Center (cf. subtask 3.2). The ABSP team also will prepare quarterly reports based on field visits and quarterly reports from NGOs and CBOs. These reports may include financial audit information. ECODIT will advise USAID promptly if any financial irregularities are discovered. Negative findings on financial reports may lead to suspension of disbursement or recommendation for termination depending on the severity and other factors.

Table 22: Subtask 5.4 – Monitor grant implementation: actions for Nov. 2007—June 2010

ACTION	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED TIMELINE	RESOURCES REQUIRED
Provide technical assistance and training to NEPA staff on monitoring adherence to applicable Environment Law provisions	M. Witz LT Professionals TBD STTA	Ongoing from June 2008 to Sept. 2009	LTTA time; STTA time & costs; training costs; travel costs
Conduct with NEPA staff monitoring field visits to grant activity locations	LT Professionals M. Witz	Ongoing from Sept. 2008 to March 2010	LTTA time; field travel costs; workshops
Prepare and submit quarterly reports on technical and financial implementation	M. Witz Finance Manager	Quarterly: Dec. 2008 through March 2010	LTTA time

The two deliverables for this subtask are “**capacity building program for NEPA staff (HQ and regional hubs) to manage NGO grants**” and “**individual NGO grant progress reports.**” As with the NGO capacity building program under the previous subtask, the capacity building part of this will need to be defined in a more measurable way. There also needs to be resolution of the question raised above about the applicability of NEPA managing grants.

The 2008 targets for this subtask will be defined in the initial M&E plan to accompany the annual work plan for that period, and a measurable indicator of “capacity building” will be included in the PMP.

ANNEX A: PRELIMINARY WORK PLAN / PERFORMANCE MONITORING TABLE

Table 23: Preliminary Work Plan and Performance Monitoring Table—tasks and subtasks, indicators, responsibilities

WORK PLAN TASK / SUBTASK	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR / DELIVERABLE(S)	TEAM MEMBER(S) RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE
Task #1: Institutional Strengthening			
<i>Subtask 1.1. Conduct rapid capacity building needs assessment</i>	About 25 workshops	Organizational Strengthening Specialist <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Capacity building plan – Jan. 2008 Plan implementation through early 2010
<i>Subtask 1.2. Develop EA Center and strengthen its capabilities</i>	Functional EA Center within NEPA [n.b. “functional” to be defined in PMP]	Organizational Strengthening Specialist <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Gap analysis completed –Dec. 2007 EA Technical assistance through mid-2009
<i>Subtask 1.3. Assist in developing management / administration systems and funding mechanisms</i>	Management and administration systems and funding mechanisms [n.b. measurable indicator(s) to be defined in PMP]	Organizational Strengthening Specialist <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Gap analysis completed – Dec. 2007 Mgmt / Admin technical assistance and staff training through end 2009
<i>Subtask 1.4. Assist NEPA to develop procedures and rules</i>	NEPA procedures and rules [n.b. measurable indicator defined in PMP]	Organizational Strengthening Specialist <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Stock-taking analysis – Jan. 2008 Materials production through 2009
<i>Subtask 1.5. Assist in establishing “green environment” technical oversight office</i>	Functional “green environment” technical oversight office upon approval by NEPA [n.b. “functional” to be defined in PMP]	Sr. Environmental Advisor (Team Leader) <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Discussions held 1 st –3 rd quarters 2008 Technical assistance through 2009
<i>Subtask 1.6. Develop and deliver short training courses and regional study tours</i>	About 12 short training courses (on technical skills required within NEPA) Two regional study tours (5 pax each)	Organizational Strengthening Specialist <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Gap analysis completed – Jan. 2008 Technical skills mentoring and staff training through end 2009
<i>Subtask 1.7. Assist in selecting two candidates for scholarships to Master’s program in environmental assessment</i>	Assistance in selection of two professional staff from NEPA for Master’s level scholarships	Sr. Environmental Advisor (Team Leader) <i>Organizational Strengthening specialist ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Selection completed by mid-2008
Task #2: National Coordination of Environmental Programs			
<i>Subtask 2.1. Assist in establishing the National Coordination of Environmental Programs committee</i>	“Issues and Options” paper, participatory workshop on proposed NCEP committee Formation of NCEP Committee following agreement on its mandate and form	Sr. Environmental Advisor (Team Leader) <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Issues & Options paper by Jun. 2008 NCEP Committee by Sept. 2008 if desired
<i>Subtask 2.2. Provide technical and financial assistance to the NCEP Committee</i>	Technical assistance to Committee on: operational guidelines, Memorandum of Agreement with NEPA; secretarial support to Committee meetings/operations for one year; establishment of NCEP Cmte. Secretariat within one year; technical assistance to secretariat for ABSP life	Sr. Environmental Advisor (Team Leader) <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Direct support through Sept. 2009 Technical assistance through Mar. 2010

WORK PLAN TASK / SUBTASK	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR / DELIVERABLE(S)	TEAM MEMBER(S) RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE
Task #3: Public Education and Outreach			
<i>Subtask 3.1. Assess communications needs</i>	Rapid communication needs assessment	Organizational Strengthening Specialist <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Assessment completed by Mar. 2008
<i>Subtask 3.2. Establish information resource center at NEPA</i>	Information resource center established and functional within NEPA [n.b. "functional" to be defined in PMP]	Organizational Strengthening Specialist <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Accessions list by Sept. 2008 Technical assistance and training through 2009
<i>Subtask 3.3. Support the production of publications and multi-media outreach</i>	Assistance to production of publications and multi-media, in particular the NEPA magazine [n.b. it is not expected that "assistance" is measured in financial terms]	Organizational Strengthening Specialist <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Print and multi-media technical assistance and training through end 2009
<i>Subtask 3.4. Work with NEPA to improve environmental education</i>	Practical recommendations and support to improving environmental education [n.b. "support" and "improving" to be defined in measurable terms in PMP]	Organizational Strengthening Specialist <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Gap analysis by end March 2008 Recommendations by Dec. 2008 Technical assistance and training through 2009
<i>Subtask 3.5. Train NEPA and other stakeholders on environmental public education and outreach</i>	Training courses delivered on public education and outreach (cf. subtask 1.6)	Organizational Strengthening Specialist <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Needs assessment by end June 2008 Training delivery through March 2010
Task #4: Environmental Regulation and Financing			
<i>Subtask 4.1. Regulation</i>	Technical assistance in formulating and enforcing regulations, especially in biodiversity conservation and the "green environment"	Sr. Environmental Advisor (Team Leader) <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Regulations development through 2008 Technical assistance on implementing regulations / enforcement through March 2010
<i>Subtask 4.2. Financing</i>	Proposed fee structure and schedule for services that NEPA will provide, including an analysis of how other government agencies would pay or not pay for NEPA's services Proposed revisions to the Environment Law and/or EA regulations to allow NEPA to charge donors and investors for EA and other services provided	Sr. Environmental Advisor (Team Leader) <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Strategic Financing Plan drafted by Dec. 2008 Technical assistance & training on implementing Plan through March 2010

WORK PLAN TASK / SUBTASK	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR / DELIVERABLE(S)	TEAM MEMBER(S) RESPONSIBLE	EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE
Task #5: Community-Based Resource Management			
<i>Subtask 5.1. Design the CBRM small grants program and establish an advisory committee</i>	Final design of CBRM program based on extensive local consultations	Organizational Strengthening Specialist <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Design submitted for USAID approval by June 2008
<i>Subtask 5.2. Prepare and issue requests for applications</i>	Requests for Applications in two stages (concept then detail)	Organizational Strengthening Specialist <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Request for Applications released by September 2008
<i>Subtask 5.3. Award grants and build NGO capacity</i>	Project concept papers selected for further development NGO outreach and capacity building program [n.b. to be defined in more measurable terms in PMP] 10-20 NGO grants awarded	Organizational Strengthening Specialist <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	Awards ongoing from September 2008 through September 2009
<i>Subtask 5.4. Monitor grant implementation and build NEPA capacity</i>	Capacity building program for NEPA staff (headquarters and regional hubs) to manage NGO grants [n.b. requires clarity on NEPA mandate to award grants and manage field implementation activities] Individual NGO grants progress reports	Organizational Strengthening Specialist <i>ABSP TBD long-term technical specialists</i>	All awards closed out by March 2010

ANNEX B: ILLUSTRATIVE TIME TABLE FOR PRELIMINARY WORK PLAN ACTIVITIES

Table 24: Illustrative Timetable for ABSP activities (Gantt chart)

BSP Tasks and Subtasks	YR1												YR2				YR3		
	Qtr1			Qtr2			Qtr3			Qtr4			Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	M13-15	M16-18	M19-21	M22-24	M25-27	M28-30	M31-32
Task 0. Team Mobilization and Office Setup (Guesthouse)																			
0.1 Expat Team Mobilization and Guesthouse Setup	X																		
0.2 Recruit the five long-term local professionals		X																	
0.3 Teambuilding and planning workshop			X																
Task a. Institutional Strengthening																			
a.1 Conduct rapid technical assistance and capacity building needs assessment		X	X																
a.2 Develop EA Center and Strengthen its Capabilities				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
a.3 Assist in developing management/administration systems and funding mechanisms				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
a.4 Assist NEPA to develop procedures and rules				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
a.5 Assist in establishing a Green Environment Technical Oversight Office (IF REQUIRED)																			
a.6 Develop and deliver short training courses and regional study tours				X		X		X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
a.7 Assist in selecting two candidates for scholarships to a Master's program in EA				X	X	X	X	X	X										
<i>Deliverables (a.1 to a.7)</i>			a1	a6		a6		a6		a6		a3	a2	a5					
Task b. National Coordination of Environmental Programs																			
b.1 Assist in Establishing the NCEP Committee							X	X	X	X	X	X							
b.2 Provide Technical Assistance to the NCEP Committee													X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Deliverables (b.1 to b.3)</i>										b1		b2	b3	b3	b3	b3	b3	b3	b3
Task c. Public Education and Outreach																			
c.1 Assess communications needs				X	X														
c.2 Establish Information Resource Center at NEPA							X	X	X	X	X	X							
c.3 Support the production of publications and multi-media outreach													X	X	X	X	X	X	
c.4 Work with NEPA to improve environmental education							X	X	X										
c.5 Train NEPA and other stakeholders on environmental public education and outreach								X											
<i>Deliverables (c.1 to c.5)</i>				c1				c5	c4			c2							
Task d. Environmental Regulation and Financing																			
d.1 Regulation				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
d.2 Financing											X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<i>Deliverables (d.1 to d.3)</i>													d2						
Task e. Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)																			
e.1 Design the CBRM Small Grants Program				X	X	X													
e.2 Prepare and issue RFAs (in two stages: concept then detail)						X		X											
e.3 Award Grants and build NGO Capacity								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
e.4 Monitor grant implementation and build NEPA Capacity								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<i>Deliverables (e.1 to e.7)</i>						e1		e2		e3		e7	e7	e7	e7	e7	e7	e7	

N.B. inserted without revision from final ECODIT Technical Proposal submitted 17 October 2007

ANNEX C: PRELIMINARY CASH FLOW PROJECTIONS

Table 25: Projected Cash Flow for ABSP Activities
[Table provided separately to USAID/Afghanistan]